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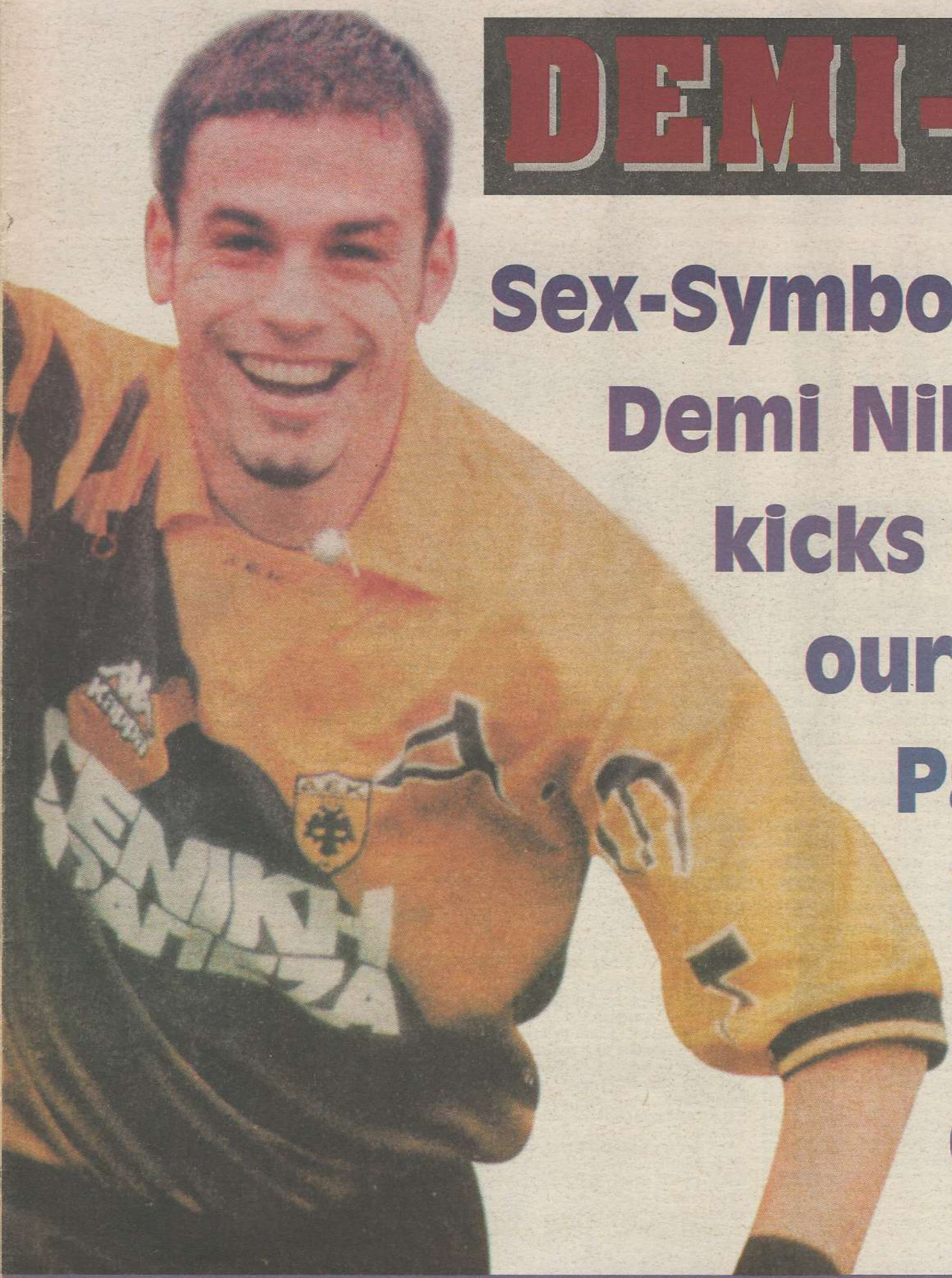

DEMI-GOD

Sex-Symbol Demi Nikolaidis kicks off our Greek Pages in the Global Game

Young Socceroos Best Ever?

Aussie Soccer TV Deal

Olyroo Blitz

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LATE NEWS

AUSSIE SOCCER ON TWO TV NETWORKS!

By ABSW

This week it is expected that a television deal involving Australian Soccer's domestic league, the Ericsson Cup, will be announced by Soccer Australia. The ten-year deal will involve the Seven network off-loading the national league for the first four years to the ABC, while keeping the Socceroos and Olyroos for themselves.

It is reputed to be worth $2.5 million a year to Soccer Australia.

Pay television would also be serviced via an agreement finalised last month in which Seven would produce sport channels for Optus in place of its production arm Sports Vision, which has been placed into liquidation.

Officials from around the country were briefed confidentially on the deal by Soccer Australia chairman David Hill at the Airport Hilton in Sydney.

The meeting was called after disquiet from National League clubs concerned at not being given information about television rights negotiations which, they feared, could lock them into a long-term agreement at a fixed-fee, something that European clubs have also said regarding the proposed Euro Super League.

ABC is believed to be interested in telecasting one live game every Sunday afternoon. Socceroos and Olyroo games would be shown by Seven with the likelihood they could also be screened by Optus.

This would be supplemented by a free-to-air highlights package every Sunday, also on Seven.

Nick Tana, chairman of National League club Perth Glory, said to AAP that the clubs had decided to speak on the issue with a "common voice rather than an individual view from any club," and all involved in briefing had agreed to keep deals confidential.

"There are some difficulties with it and we're trying to address that and work it through with Soccer Australia given the sensitive nature of negotiations," Tana said.

"We don't want to jeopardise anything for the code."

Tana said the new television deal was without doubt an improvement on existing arrangements with SBS.

"When you start from a low base it's not difficult to improve," he said.

See page five for report by John Economos.

Australian News

YOUNG SOCCEROOS: STRONGEST YET?

RIZZO AND EMERTON PLAYING IN QUALIFIERS

Experience is a vital component in international soccer and the Australian Under-20s have five players, says head coach Les Scheinflug, that have plenty of it.

Carlton's Vince Grella, Simon Colosimo, Michael Bresciano and Sydney Olympic's Brett Emerton all starred in Australia's 1997 Under-20 World Cup charge in Malaysia.

Add Crystal Palace's new signing Nick Rizzo to the equation, then Scheinflug has under his tutelage a crop of players who should have too much know-how for their Under-20 qualifying counterparts in Samoa during August 14 and August 24.

Scheinflug has hosed down doubts surrounding Rizzo's appearance for the Samoan qualifiers.

"I spoke to Terry Venables (the new Crystal Palace manager) and he knows the importance of the up-coming World Cup qualifiers to Australia," commented Scheinflug.

"I also know that it's important for Rizzo, club-wise, however, I am confident everything will work out."

Scheinflug earmarked Grella, Colosimo, Emerton, Rizzo and Bresciano as Australia's key players. Emerton was in superb form for the Olyroos during their successful five-game South American tour (see story on this page).

When one thinks back to great Young Socceroo sides of the past (Muscat's 93 side, the Okon team of 91 and even the Koussas led 81 squad that beat Argentina) this squad would be, arguably, the best yet.

The draw for the Oceania Football Confederation tournament is:

Group A	Group B
1: Australia	1: New Zealand
2: Fiji	2: Vanuatu
3: Tonga	3: American Samoa
4: Samoa	4: Solomon Islands

Australia's first match is on August 15 versus Fiji. The Young Socceroos' OFC tournament schedule then sees them play Tonga on Tuesday, August 18 and hosts Samoa on Thursday, August 20.

The semi-finals are set for Saturday, August 22; the play-off for third-place and the final is on Monday, August 24.

The 20-man squad assembled for week-long Darwin camp that commenced this week (Monday) August 3. The squad is:

Nick Rizzo

Goalkeepers: Anthony Breaden (Adelaide City), Brad Swancott (Newcastle Breakers); Defenders: Eddy Bosnar (Northern Spirit), Adriano Cuzzupe (Victorian Institute of Sport), Vic Tomasevic (Marconi Fairfield), Paul Wearne (Northern Spirit), Lindsay Wilson (Canberra Cosmos), Michael Cunico (Northern Spirit), Matthew Langdon (Northern Spirit); Midfielders: David Terminello (Adelaide City), Christian Care (Marconi Fairfield), Vince Grella (Carlton), Michael Ferrante (Australian Institute of Sport), Marco Bresciano (Carlton), Brett Emerton (Sydney Olympic); Strikers: Mile Sterjovski (Sydney United), Travis Dodd (Adelaide City), Nick Carle (Sydney Olympic), Daniel Invincibile (Brisbane Strikers), Dane Vidakovic (West Adelaide).

The World Youth Championship for the FIFA/Coca-Cola Cup (Under-20) is to be held in Nigeria between April 3 and April 24, 1999.

Three players: Simon Colosimo (Carlton), John Maisano (KVC Westerlo) and Rizzo, will join the squad briefly in Sydney before they depart for Samoa.

EMO'S OLYROO WORLD-BEATERS!

By Aidan Ormond

Let's face it, there is no stopping our brilliant Olyroos. First they teach Brazil a lesson in how to play (beating them three times here in Australia a few months ago).

Then they steamroll the Kiwis by the same score, and now, on their just-completed South American tour, they have drawn with Chile and beaten Argentina.

Of course Australia beat Argentina last year at the U/20 World Youth Championships in Malaysia courtesy of a four-goal Kosta Salapasidis.

America has been a great success for the squad, particularly when you consider this was not the strongest line-up coach Blanco is able to field, showing once again the depth of talent in Australia at this level. On tour the Australians scored seven and let in only four.

Match 1: San Lorenso 1 Olyroos 0
Match 2: Universidat Catolica 1 Olyroos 0
Match 3: Audax Italiano 1 Olyroos 5
Match 4: Chile 1 Olyroos 1
Match 5: Argentina 0 Olyroos 1

He's back ... Brett Emerton and the Olyroos returned last Saturday after beating Argentina.

The Argentina Under-23 team, who won the 1997 FIFA World Youth Championship in Malaysia against Ghana, were behind after only 28-minutes when skipper Brett Emerton netted his fourth goal in three matches.

The Olyroos' five-match, 25-day tour of South

Australian team line-up against Argentina was:

Joe Didulica, Dragi Nastevski, Tansel Baser, Ivan Zelic, Sebastian Sinozic, Andy Vargas (Michael Bresciano 50'), Jacob Burns, Kasey Wehrman, Brett Emerton, Michael Curcija (Nick Carle 60'), Zeljko Susa.

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Australian News

MUNRO SIGNS WELSH DEFENDER

Gippsland Falcons have signed the experienced Welsh internationalist defender Jeff Hopkins.

Hopkins will come to the Falcons from the Malaysian league where he has played for the Selangor club. Prior to joining Selangor, Hopkins had a distinguished career spanning over 17 years in English Soccer Leagues.

His resume includes over 500 senior appearances with Reading Crystal Palace and Fulham.

Falcons coach Stuart Munro was delighted to secure Hopkins services, "Jeff is a highly talented player who will add experience and depth to our team.

"He represents a great opportunity for our younger players to learn and gain knowledge of what it takes to be a professional soccer player at the highest level," said Munro.

Standing at 6 foot tall, Hopkins will be an imposing presence in the Falcons defence this season and will compliment Munro's new game plan of attack from defence. "He'll be the general of our defence and will be the catalyst from which we will launch our attacks," added Munro.

Hopkins is expected to settle in the valley with his wife and two children as soon as his visa and entry arrangements have been finalised.

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TYNAN-EYRE CUP FOR VICTORIA

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Victoria's Ericsson Cup and top Premier League clubs will meet head-to-head for the Tynan-Eyre Cup. The Tynan-Eyre Cup has been run for four years, but this year's cup will be contested by eight teams rather than two.

The Cup is the iniative of the Tynan-Eyre Memorial Foundation, established in 1988 after the brutal murders of Police Constables Steven Tynan and Damian Eyre.

Funds raised by the Foundation are distributed to many organistaions, such as hospitals, within Victoria.

This year's Cup will be played over four weeks at Bulleen, Gippsland Falcons, Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne's grounds.

There is prize money for the winners of each game plus a 'skins' competition that rewards the team that scores the most goals.

Bulleen's Veneto Club ground hosts the first week of the competition on August 30 when Carlton take on Green Gully Cavaliers and Melbourne Knights face Bulleen Inter Kings.

TYNAN - EYRE CUP

Week 1 - Sunday August 30
Veneto Club, Bulleen
Carlton v Green Gully Cavaliers - kick off 2.00pm
Melbourne Knights v Bulleen Inter Kings - kick off 4.00pm

Week 2 - Sunday September 6
Falcons Park, Morwell
South Melbourne v St Albans Saints - kick off 1.00pm
Gippsland Falcons v Altona Magic - kick off 3.15pm

Week 3 - Sunday September 13
Knights Stadium, Sunshine
Carlton/Green Gully v Melb. Knights/Bulleen - kick off 1.00pm
South Melb./St Albans v Gippsland/Altona - kick off 3.00pm

Week 4 - Sunday September 20
Lakeside Stadium, Albert Park
Victoria Police team v New South Wales Police team - kick off 3.00pm

FINAL - kick off 6.00pm

ROCHEDALE TURN IT ON

By Glenn Davis

Ipswich Knights' XXXX league semi-final prospects were dealt a several blow by Rochedale Rovers who won a fiery clash 2-1 at Eric Evans Reserve on Sunday. Ipswich, who shared equal fourth place but trailed Rochedale on goal difference before the game, are now three points out of a semi-final place and four points adrift of third placed Taringa after they downed Beenleigh 2-1 on Saturday.

With only five matches remaining, Ipswich can't afford any further slip ups with the pressure right on for the remainder of the season.

Rochedale looked the better side in the first half taking a 1-0 lead in the 27th minute through a classic Clayton Koch volley.

Koch's game breaker came after left midfielder Alun Evans fired in a free-kick from near the half way line which Koch volleyed spectacularly into the roof of the net from 20 metres.

The goal was just reward after Rochedale missed two earlier chances.

Rochedale's first chance fell to Matt Olley who missed with a one-on-one with Ipswich keeper Barney Smith while the second came from a well worked move involving midfielder Michael Legg.

Legg sent in a perfect chip into the box for defender Damien Harris who powerfully chested back to striker Steve Fitzsimmons whose piledriver from the edge of the area sailed marginally wide.

The goal sparked the home side into action, levelling five minutes from the break through Damien Conquest who finished off a powerful run down the left flank from midfielder Craig Collins.

Although Rochedale had the better share of possession and controlled the first half, Ipswich were unlucky not to go in at halftime with the lead.

A shot from Peter Vogler was cleared off the line by Legg three minutes from the break then, in time-on, Vogler snapped another shot onto the upright following a costly mistake from Evans who was dispossessed in centre field by Ipswich midfielder Peter McKendrick.

The match-up between the two combatants often had plenty of fireworks which referee John Pocock had difficulty controlling.

Legg was booked during the game after scuffling with an Ipswich defender yet he was lucky to stay on the park had Pocock booked him only minutes earlier for a similar scuffle with keeper Smith.

Both sides became frustrated with some of Pocock's decisions, not least the home crowd who jeered the referee for some strange rulings.

With the scores locked 1-1 with less than 15 minutes remaining, Rochedale always looked the team most likely to grab the decisive winner.

And it came in the 77th minute when Vogler failed to chase back on Evans letting him run and round McKendrick before driving home past Smith in goal.

With the top four, Brisbane City, Brisbane Lions, Taringa and now Rochedale are breaking free with only five matches remaining — Ipswich must rely on slip-ups from either Taringa or Rochedale to make the play-offs.

Taringa's defeat of Beenleigh, through a first half goal from Des Hughes and a penalty from Dmitri Theochari, came at a price with skilful midfielder Richard Hilli likely to be ruled out for the remainder of the season.

"Richard was hit in a cruel tackle from behind in the first minute and his season looks to be over," said coach John Ogden.

"The early injury upset our rhythm quite a bit and it took us a while to recover but overall we played well and deserved to win."

In the other matches league leaders Brisbane City were given a fright drawing 1-all with Mt Gravatt, Wynnum downed Bundaberg 3-2 while Brisbane Lions retained second place with a 2-1 win over the Gold Coast.

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Australian News

SHOW ME THE MONEY!

By John Economos

Certain national league clubs are totally dissatisfied with the entire deal reported to be worth $25 million and spanned over a period of 10 years with Seven for Australian Soccer.

A meeting by the "Strategic Planning Implementation Committee" ("SPIC") was held last Friday at Sydney's Airport Hilton to review the television deal done by Hill.

The meeting included high-profile Soccer administrators such as Wally Dan (Queensland), John Barker (Tasmania), Nick Tana (President and majority owner of Perth Glory), Tony Labbozzetta (President of Club Marconi), Sue-Baker Finch (Commissioner of Soccer Australia), Les Avery (Head of South Australia)

The NSL clubs are emphatically unhappy with the slice of the television dollar they are expected to just accept.

With their very own operational expenses forever spiralling in a northerly direction every year since the inception of the League 21 years ago, this is most understandable.

Secondly with the far too long a term of granting the Seven Network a 10 year period with exclusive rights, also is understandable.

The clubs in the NSL have now authorised Nick Tana to urgently write a letter expressing dissatisfaction to Hill at Soccer Australia, urging him to immediately re-negotiate the whole television deal.

It appears that Seven, also understandably, is only really interested in securing the telecasting rights to all of Australia's internationals including those of our Olympic team.

The ten year period deal with Seven would automatically embrace for the Network the most attractive and very important two World Cup campaigns by Australia (2002 and 2006).

As far as coverage of the Ericsson National League is concerned, Seven is believed to be willing to farm it out to the ABC for the first four years.

It's also believed that Seven may be willing to screen a 15 minute Soccer segment on a Sunday morning.

Yet the clubs have been offered a paltry $800,000 slice of the deal per season with Soccer Australia cutting itself in for an annualised balance of $1.7 million.

What will $800,000 be really worth to the NSL in 10 years time?

Last season the NSL generated $600,000 in television fees into its ledger.

The National League clubs had specifically made it clear to Hill that they did not want a too long a term deal with any TV Network.

A club spokesman from South Australia ratified this very point to ABSW last night, stating: "Mr Hill was given a specific mandate to get Soccer on a commercial network if possible, but to not tie us up to any long-term deal.

"Ten years out is a far too long a period to be tied down to one network at a fixed fee.

"For us to readily accept it doesn't make for any economic sense or logic."

SHORT PASSES

By ABSW

Carlton are making the switch from Saturday games to Sunday for the upcoming season. The experiment of playing on Saturday afternoons didn't work out as they had planned. It is expected that the way the fixtures will work, South Melbourne and Melburne Knights' home games will clash on Sundays.

The new Knights coach Vid Horvat is expected to arrive sometime this week at Somers Street to start work with the NSL club.

The Young Socceroos will play two friendly matches this Thursday and Saturday against a senior Northern Territories select team during the squad's week-long Darwin training camp.

Olryoo coach Raul Blanco spotted Glen Kolpak playing for a Queensland select side in 1997. In June, 1998 Blanco selected Kolpak for the Olyroos' three-match series against New Zealand, where the player scored in Coffs Harbour. Now the unknown Rochedale Rovers (who play in the Queensland XXXX league) striker is said to be on his way to Ericsson Cup side Brisbane Strikers. And remember, it was ABSW who first told you about this young player.

Wollongong's Matt Horsley recently said no to an offer from Sydney Olympic. And Kosta Salapasidis and Michael Brooks have found a place near the beach in Wollongong. We also believe 'Sala' has been chased recently by Marconi, offering him big bucks to play for the glamour side in Sydney. Wollongong will play Northern Spirit on 4 October and Sydney Utd on September 12 in pre-season friendlies. Nick T, Wolves coach has also signed his new contract. The coach was recently in Europe.

Jim Nikas, a Super League player in NSW has had a host of NSL coaches watching him recently.

Sydney Olympic will play two games against Wollongong: 19 and 26 September. They have also arranged a game against Canterbury Marrickville.

GLORY SPEND BIG ON STARS

Cash rich Perth Glory have sent a clear warning to its Ericsson Cup rivals when it announced the signing of Socceroo wing back Rob Trajkovski and German-based Olyroo keeper Danny Milosevic.

Trajkovski (right) is one of the Ericsson Cup's most exciting players — and Glory General manager Roger Lefort said the signing coup demonstrated the club's commitment to making the finals with the strongest possible squad of players for new coach Bernd Stange.

"Glory is after finals football this season and we are prepared to sign the best players available to reach that goal," said Lefort.

"Rob is an exciting, attack-minded, wing back and he will become a firm favourite with the Glory crowd."

"He is one of the finest crossers in the competition and had an excellent time last season, making his debut for the Socceroos against South Korea and experiencing finals action with Carlton."

"For obvious reasons I cannot discuss transfer fees, but suffice it to say that Glory is happy with the deal.

"Rob's attacking style will win him many friends and fit well into Glory's style of play."

Trajkovski's transfer, however, is somewhat strange given that last week we reported that the 26 year old had just signed with Sydney Olympic!! Obviously Sydney's water problems were too much for Robbie so he upped and left! We do however believe his financial demands may have also had something to do with his swift departure from the Culina-led Sydney Olympic.

Meanwhile, Milosevic's transfer gives Glory one of the strongest goalkeeping ranks in the league. The Olyroo keeper now joins Socceroo veteran Tony Franken (above) at the club. Lefort added that he was looking very much to seeing Milosevic at the club and believed that the new coach "will bring the best out in him and we are delighted that he is joining us as he is the number one Olyroo keeper."

The club also expects to sign towering Kiwi defender Danny Hay, who was overseas trialling in the off-season. The club has received offers for him and they are simply weighing up their options, but nevertheless are keen for him to be a part of their plans. And the decision on the building of a new stadium for Glory (and any future World Cup?) is still being discussed. Lefort believes the WA state government are for it but no firm decision has been made.

Perth Glory commenced their training for the new season today amidst a flurry of media attention from the commercial media.

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Australian News

VIS GRADS IN DEMAND

By Aidan Ormond

Australia's highly-respected Victorian Institute of Sport has produced another soccer player that has caught the eye of a major club in Europe. Steve Laurie (right) has been signed by West Ham in the English Premier League. The youngster played last season at the VIS from August 97 to July 98.

At only 15 the central defender is rated by many judges as a future international. He captained Australia U/17s against Japan this year and came up from the juniors at Altona City and Bulleen Inter Kings in Victoria.

He is currently on a three year scholarship with the Upton Park club. His coach at the VIS, Ernie Merrick (pictured bottom with Laurie and the VIS squad of 1998) rates him very highly and describes him as a "terrific player and terrific person who will play for Australia in the future."

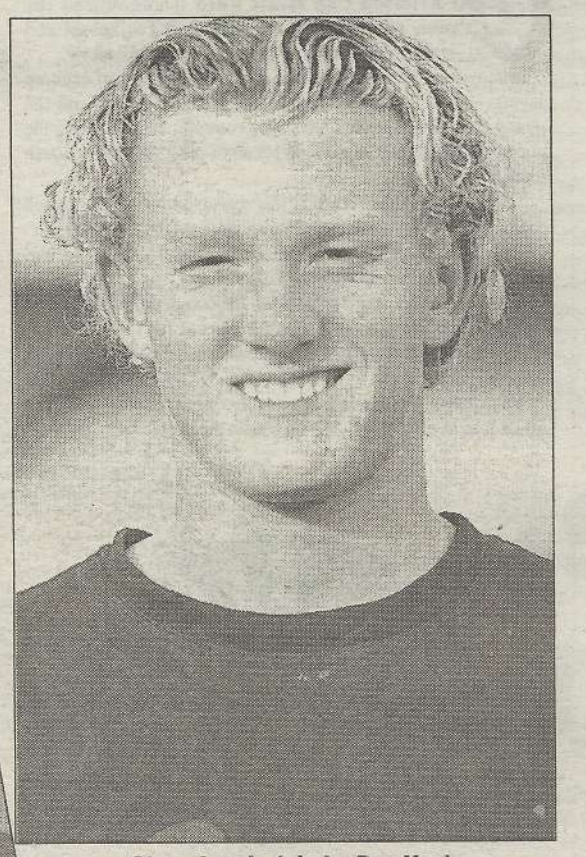
No doubt Laurie will want to emulate Hammers' very popular Aussie Stan Lazaridis, who is a regular in the first team at West Ham.

Hammers' chief executive director of Football, Peter Storrie, has been quoted as saying that Laurie has potential and that "a number of clubs were after him, including German Bundesliga outfit Werder Bremen. The club have bought a house in Romford which we should name Australia House because, apart from Steve, we have some of his countrymen staying there," said Storrie.

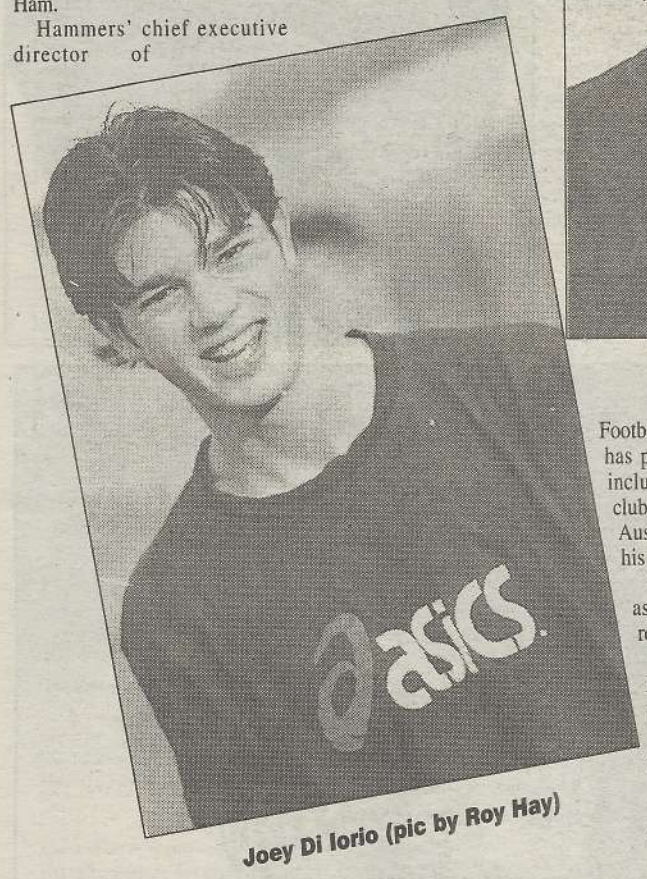
The three-year scholarship programme will involve all aspects of the game and the young Aussie will also be required to continue his education.

Two other VIS players, Joey di Iorio (left) and Fab Lettieri, have also headed off overseas, the two players are currently in Germany, while Adrian Cuzzupe is now with Ericsson Cup champions South Melbourne. Big things are also expected of these three players.

Reports recently that Laurie was a produet of West Ham-sponsored WA club Kingsway Hammers are incorrect.



Steve Laurie (pic by Roy Hay)



Joey Di Iorio (pic by Roy Hay)

Pic by Stuckey Photography of VIS Soccer Squad 1998

BILL TURNER CUP

FOORD'S BEAUTY TOO LATE FOR PORT

All Saints College, St Peters, Maitland and travelled to Port Macquarie High for their round five encounter, with great expectations of a first rate fixture.

Despite the adverse weather conditions the match was very competitive and exciting.

There had been some discussion prior to kick-off regarding the condition of Dixie Park but it had stood up to the constant rain very well and considering St Peters was making a round trip journey of 450k's both managers Roger McGibson and Jim Mate agreed the match must go on.

Dixie Park took the rainfall very well and referee Eric Hanlon kept a close eye on all proceedings so as to avoid any potential injury.

Following an even start St Peters appeared to move into a slightly higher gear which found Joshua Castillo on hand to slot home the first goal.

As the game progressed, more rain fell and more pools of water became evident but this did not detract from a particularly high standard fixture.

Thomas Libbesson was next to score for the visitors after some enterprising half back play. This did not deter the home side at all and they lifted their game, coming close on three occasions.

Nearing the end of play Port Macquarie supporter rose to their collective feet to applaud a top goal from defender David Foord.

The last five minutes were Hectic with both side giving everything, urged on by very enthusiastic spectators.

However at full-time the brave effort from the Port side was just shaded by the visitors in what was an excellent game.

Port Macquarie High were best served by Tyler Pollard, Jace March and Nathan Whealey while for St Peters Thomas Libbesson, Matthew Parke and Joshua Castillo shone.

ASC St Peters, Maitland 2 defeated Port Macquarie High 1.
Referee: Mr Eric Hanlon.

A.S.C. ST PETERS MAITLAND
Back Row L to R: Martin Henry, Joshua Castillo, Nigel Zenno, Luke Lancaster, James White, Paul Cornwall, Matthew Parke, Thomas Libbesson, Mr Jim Mate, Coach.
Front Row: Andrew Haddad, Rodney Bunker, Brenton Cahill, Scott Cahill (capt), Shannon Szmynec, Ryan Prater.

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Australian News

ROCKETS' SQUADS NAMED

By Graham Cooke

Three players rejected by the Canberra Cosmos, have been taken into the Canberra Rockets senior squad for the game against Ericsson Cup outfit Marconi Fairfield on August 15.

Goalkeeper Anthony Giannasca (Capital City Suns), defender and reigning ACT Player of the Year Jason Dunn and his Belconnen United team mate, striker Marko Perinovic, have been officially passed over by coach Rale Rasic and become eligible for the Rockets.

All three stand to make valuable contributions. Dunn played just half a game for the Cosmos last season and his exclusion was always controversial. Now he will link with Joe Gagetti in what will be an experienced and formidable back line.

Perinovic allows coach Ian Heywood increased options up front, where the coach also has George Cattanach, Njegosh Popovich, Steve Lazzari and possibly even David Milin to choose from, and Giannasca will almost certainly start off by being the first choice goalkeeper, giving Pedro Pavez something to aim for.

The timing of the games (on a Saturday at 3pm and 5pm at the Bruce Athletics Field) has caused controversy, with some clubs issuing threats not to release their players less than 24 hours ahead of a full round of club games.

However, with 13 of the 18 rounds completed, the ACT Premier League top four looked fairly set, with seven points separating fourth placed Suns and Gungahlin Juventus in fifth spot.

Moreover Soccer Canberra has been adopting a concilitory attitude, with promises that hard hit clubs will be granted postponements.

Juventus, Deakin and Belconnen United will certainly fall into that category, all with eight players spread over the Rockets and Young Rockets squads. Canberra Olympic has seven.

Canberra Rockets: Geoff Howarth, Paul Chalmers, Jason Dunn, Marko Perinovic (Belconnen United), David Milin (Canberra Deakin), Anthony Giannasca (Capital City Suns), Elliott Zwangobani, Njegosh Popovich, Steve Vanzetti (Canberra Olympic), Alex Tsiokos, Scott Conlon, George Cattanach, Pedro Pavez (Gungahlin Juventus), Jimmy Baxter, Joe Gagetti, John Rakic (Monaro), Steve Lazzari, Adrian Paragalli (Weston Creek Royals).

Young Rockets: Lee Pietrukowski, Scott Manson, Matt Whyte, Steven Craig (Belconnen United), Mikey Katz, Brent Chick (Canberra City), Adam Williams, Goran Talevski, Wes Bryett, Anthony Barac, Marcello Munoz (Canberra Deakin), John Glass, Oscar Zamora, Gabriel Exposito, Matt Valeri (Gungahlin Juventus), Angelo Konstantinou, Elia Salloum, Pino Seminara, David Palywoda (Canberra Olympic).

SUPREME COURT APPEAL FOR VIC FINALS?

GULLY AND MAGIC PASS FIRST FINALS TEST

"Evis Heath (centre) of Port Melbourne Sharks tries to get to the ball ahead of Green Gully keeper Chris Vella (left) and Steve Mangos (right). Ante Kovacevic of Green Gully in the background. Vella had a great game and saved the Cavaliers in the penalty shootout.
Pic by Roy Hay

The finals of the Victorian Premier League are now underway. However controversy dogged the first games with an administrative error threatening to derail the finals by bringing in to question the validity of one of the games. A Supreme Court challenge has not been ruled out by one of the clubs.

Nevertheless on the park at Melbourne Knights' home ground of Somers Street, the Elimination Final and Qualifying Final were very even and exciting, going to penalty shootouts in both cases.

The standard of both games was, according to reports, very high with Chris Vella (above) starring for Gully.

See Dwyght Tuffnell and John Rigas match reports on page 14 and turn the page for the Sash Becvinovski and Harry Karl special.

GIANNITTO SIGNS OFF

By Rob & Frank from Radio RTI

Round 17 Premier League match with two rounds to go, things are really hotting up for places in the top five playoffs. No exception at the Adey Reserve where 5RTI's 92.7FM match of the day will be between the struggling Blue Eagles against title favourites West Torrens Birkalla.

Blue Eagles, after winning the Mutual Community Federation Cup final have really struggled and must win their next two games to have any chance to play in the finals.

Player coach Zoran Karadzic will have to be at his best to overcome Charlie Villani's West Torrens Birkalla, the game will also see Blue Eagles captain Angelo Giannitto playing his last home game (he has decided to retire after this season).

Ramsey Park sees last ditch efforts by Elizabeth City Rams and the improved Raiders battle it out to keep their hopes alive for the finals.

Croydon Kings will do battle with Port Lion Pirates at the Polonia Reserve, with a certain double chance for the Kings in the final, the Pirates will go all out to have a slender chance in making the playoffs.

Bailey Reserve will see the Cumberland Foxes clinging on for a top five berth, play the dangerous Olympian Flames, Foxes will welcome back Ad Sharks keeper Nathan Wildy who was with the Olyroos on their recent tour in South America.

White City who have been the form team of late will have a tough test at the Woodville West Reserve against the Campbelltown Red Devils, with the maestro Milan Ivanovic (above) available for the finals White City must keep on winning to have any chance to make the playoffs.

Sydney Olympic and Youth international Carlos Gonzales (above) is on his way to leading Premier League team Tottenham Hotspur.

The London-based side - boasting such stars as David Ginola, Ian Walker and new $3million-plus signing Paolo Tramezzani from Piacenza - could have the talented Australian on their books at the end of this month.

Gonzales was in the Australian Under-23 squad that beat Brazil three-times during the 'Olyroo Challenge'.

Gonzales also spent time with Newcastle United last year while in England and is one of the most skilful young players in the country.

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Australia-wide

Northern NSW

ROUND 19
FIRST GRADE

Adamstown	2	Easts Maitland	1
Toronto	2	Broadmeadow	1
Hamilton	3	Wallsend	1
Edgeworth	8	Belmont	0
Cessnock	3	Highfields	1
Weston	1	Weathertex	1
Edgeworth	8	Cessnock	2

Illawarra

PREMIER LEAGUE
ROUND 16

Cringila	16	12	2	2	36	15	28
Port Kembla	16	10	1	5	38	20	31
White Eagle	15	7	7	1	25	18	28
North United	16	7	3	6	30	24	24
Lysaghts	15	7	5	3	27	16	23
Woll. Olympic	15	7	1	7	29	23	22
Bulli	16	5	7	4	17	20	22
Kemblawarra	15	4	5	6	26	32	17
Fernhill	15	4	4	7	20	30	16
Coniston	16	3	4	9	14	31	13
Dapto	16	2	5	9	14	25	11
Helensburgh	15	3	-	12	15	37	9

RESULTS
WEEKEND SAT 1.8.98

Bulli	4	Lysaghts	2
Coniston Lions	2	Northern United	1
Cringila Lions	0	Port Kembla	0
White Eagles	2	Dapto	2
Wollongong Olympic	1	Kemblawarra	0
Fernhill	3	Helensburgh	1
Lysaghts	1	Wollongong Olympic	3
Helensburgh	2	White Eagles	2
Kemblawarra	3	Fernhill	0

Queensland

XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Brisbane City	22	15	6	1	52	16	51
Brisbane Lions	22	13	3	6	42	30	42
Taringa Rovers	22	12	5	5	34	21	41
Rochedale Rov	22	13	1	8	38	26	40
IPSW Knights	22	12	1	9	33	32	37
Mt Gravatt	22	6	7	9	36	37	25
Wynnum	22	7	4	11	28	36	25
B'berg Waves	22	7	1	14	30	45	22
Gold Coast	22	5	6	11	26	35	21
Beenleigh	22	3	0	19	21	62	9

ROUND 22

IPSW Knights	1	Rochedale Rov	2
Mt Gravatt	1	Brisbane City	1
Beenleigh	0	Taringa Rovers	2
B'berg Waves	2	Wynnum	3
Gold Coast	1	Brisbane Lions	2

DIVISION ONE
SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Toowoomba Utd	20	17	1	2	56	16	52
Rocklea Utd	19	11	2	6	50	31	35
Capalaba	19	8	6	5	36	25	30
Inala City	20	9	2	9	41	48	29
Souths Utd	20	6	8	6	31	29	26
Acacia Ridge	19	7	2	10	36	41	23
Olympic Utd	29	6	3	11	31	40	21
Redlands Utd	19	5	2	12	34	60	17
Slacks Creek	20	4	4	12	26	50	16

ROUND 22

Acacia Ridge	0	Bye	0
Toowoomba Utd	2	Capalaba	0
Slacks Creek	4	Inala City	2
Rocklea Utd	2	Olympic Utd	2
Redlands Utd	1	Souths Utd	2

DIVISION ONE
NORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Eastern Subs	20	14	5	1	35	14	47
Albany Creek	20	9	6	5	37	20	33
Uni of Qld	19	9	5	5	30	23	32
Pine Rivers Utd	20	7	8	5	23	18	29
Mitchelton	20	7	5	8	29	33	26
The Gap	19	7	4	8	34	36	25
Newmarket	20	4	6	10	21	40	18
Grange Thistle	19	4	4	11	19	31	16
North Star	19	4	3	12	23	37	15

ROUND 22

Grange Thistle	0	Pine Rivers Utd	1
The Gap	1	Newmarket	2
Eastern Subs	3	Mitchelton	0
Albany Creek	2	Uni of Qld	2
North Star	0	Bye	0

West Coast

PREMIER DIVISION

Inglewood	2	Falcons	2
Kingsway Olympic	0	Floreat Athena	3
Joondalup City	2	Stirling Macedonia	1
Perth	2	Bayswater City P	2
Cockburn City	0	Western Knights	5

DIVISION ONE

Southside Utd	2	Queens Park	4
Rockingham City	8	Armadale	1
Perth City/Leeming Stks	0	Swan IC	7
Stirling Suns	1	Bassendean Cale	1
Balcatta	1	Ashfield/Bunbury	1
Wanneroo City	4	North Lake Espanol	1

AUSTWEST HOMES
PREMIER DIVISION

Fremantle United	3	Sorrento Amateurs	0
Murdoch University	1	Kwinana United	1
Beechboro W E	1	Morley Windmills	3
Forrestfield United	4	Hamersley Rovers	1
Shamrock Rovers	3	WA Maccabi	1
Mandurah City	3	Canning Langford	2

OLA SPORTS COVER
DIVISION ONE

Balga	2	Cloverdale Chindits	2
University Of WA	2	Perth Royals	1
Stirling Macedonia	0	South Perth United	3
Lynwood Chile	2	Naval Base Wescoa	0
Belmont Villa	1	Subiaco	4
Joondalup City	3	Spearwood Dal	3
Colo Colo	0	Perth Azzurri	3

DIVISION TWO

Yanchep	0	Rochester Amateurs	10
North Beach	1	Ballajura	2
Willeton	1	Carlisle	1
Perth Entertainers	3	Rockingham City	3
Morley United	0	North Perth United	1
Gosnells City	1	Cockburn United	0

Victorian Churches Association

FIRST DIVISION
DIVISION 1
ROUND 13

Box Hill	1	Morrison	3
Eastern United	6	Lilydale (1)	1
North Blackburn (1)	6	Berwick Blues	3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Eastern United (1)	13	12	1	0	46	8	37
Lilydale (1)	13	6	3	4	33	24	21
Morrison	13	6	3	4	29	25	21
North Blackburn (1)	13	4	3	6	25	27	15
Box Hill	13	3	1	9	12	30	10
Berwick Blue	13	2	1	10	17	48	7

South Australia

PREMIER DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
West Torrens Birkalla	16	12	1	3	36	23	37
Campbelltown City	16	10	2	4	33	18	32
Croydon	16	8	3	5	32	26	27
Adelaide Blue Eagles	16	7	2	7	21	24	23
Cumberland United	16	6	4	6	22	28	22
WE Warriors	16	5	4	7	22	22	19
Pt Adelaide Lion	16	5	3	8	21	26	18
Elizabeth City	16	4	5	7	24	26	17
Olympians	16	5	2	9	16	30	17
Raiders	16	4	2	10	21	25	14

ROUND 16

W Torrens Birkalla	2	WE Warriors	0
Campbelltown City	1	Cumberland Utd	1
Olympians	2	Croydon	1
Pt Adelaide Lion	5	Elizabeth City	2
Raiders	1	Adel Blue Eagles	2

STATE LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Modbury	20	14	4	2	51	22	46
West Adelaide	19	12	2	5	47	28	38
Enfield City	20	11	4	5	32	26	37
Adelaide Cobras	20	11	3	6	40	29	36
Adelaide City	19	9	3	7	36	23	30
Para Hills Knights	20	9	2	9	34	36	29
Noarlunga United	20	8	4	8	32	35	28
Salisbury United	20	7	2	11	35	45	23
Adelaide Hills	20	6	4	10	32	43	22
Port Pirie City	20	4	6	10	39	54	18
Seaford	20	4	3	13	26	49	15
Western Strikers	20	3	5	12	22	36	14

Bill Turner Cup

Commonwealth Bank Cup Round 6: Lambton 1 Hurstville Boys 0, Westfields 2-4 Duval 2-3, Keira 4 Epping Boys 1, Orange 3 Granville Boys 0, Taree 0-6 Sydney Tech 0-5, Kadina 2 Umina 0, Doonside 2 Vincentia 1, Bossley Park 0-5 Albury 0-4.

Commonwealth Bank Shield Round 6: Endeavour 2 West Wallsend 0, Kadina 4 Riverside Girls 2, Cootamundra 2 Bossley Park 0.

Round 3: Holy Spirit 2 Pioneer 0, Brisbane Grammar 6 Padua College 0.

Round 4: Yeppoon 2 Chanel 0, Aldridge 2 Bundaberg 1, Pine Rivers 2 Dakabin 1, Runcorn 6 Bremer 0, Windaroo Valley 5 Beaudesert 2, Palm Beach-Currumbin 2 Trinity Lutheran 1.

Round 5: Pat Bros Blacktown 1 St Agnes 0, Endeavour 3 Kingsgrove North 0, Whitebridge 7 The Entrance 2.

Australian Features

STRIKERS' SHOWDOWN

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE FINALS SPECIAL WITH ABSW'S SHERIFF DWYGHT TUFFNELL

HARRY V SASH
Hotshots' Finals Showdown

Victorian defenders beware! Sash Becvinovski and Harry Karl are both out to make your finals series as miserable as possible. In what was a great season for forwards in generally in the Victorian Premier League, both Becvinovski and Karl stood out in their battle for the top goalscorer award. And what a showdown it has been

Karl had lead for most of the season until a hat-trick in the last round by Becvinovski swept him to his third top scorers' prize.

It has to be said that Becvinovski is the undisputed king when it comes to goalscoring in the Premier League, but Karl wants his crown. That's what makes these finals so interesting.

Along with this year's top scorer award, Sash carried it off in 1991 and 1992, when playing for Green Gully.

"It's been a good year for me," he reflected to ABSW before last weekend's finals in Victoria. "I've been more consistent this year scoring nearly every second game, when in previous years I'd go through a spell of four or five games without scoring."

Goals are a big part of his motivation in every sense of the word. Becvinovski sets himself the target of 20 goals a season saying : "A striker in the Premier League should be scoring 20 goals a year."

On the other hand Karl, in his first full year for St Albans, scored 22 goals in helping the Saints to the Minor Premiership. But the young hotshot, with typical strikers' bravado and confidence thinks that he could have scored even more.

"Near the end of the year I thought I could get 25, but the service from the my team mates wasn't so good."

Karl, though, isn't complaining about his haul.

"It hasn't been a bad year. Kon Sianidis (Karl's strike partner), helps me a lot with the work that he does."

Becvinovski really led from the front too. He netted 23 goals for Altona, nearly half of their total accumulation. He seems to have been around for ages, yet he is only 26 years old, however, his stints in the National League with Melbourne JUST, Wollongong Macedonia, Gippsland Falcons and Melbourne Zebras, he didn't exactly set the world on fire.

"I would love another go at the National League," he notes fondly.

"It's difficult when you see friends and players you've played against go overseas or to the National League.

"The clubs would be looking at me and thinking that I've been to four National League clubs already and is it worth it taking a chance on me?" the striker concedes.

It's something that certainly disappoints him.

"It's not like in Europe where you can go and play in another country.

"It's hard in Australia. You've only got the National League and the Premier League.

"I am always optimistic though, I'll just keep plugging away."

At Premier League level however, it is a totally different story.

He regularly finds the net and has averaged nearly 20 goals a season in his time with Green Gully, Preston and Altona.

In contrast Karl is a fresh face on the Australian scene. He arrived from Croatia just two years ago and spent his early years playing for Croatia Zagreb before being loaned out to a second division club when he was just 18.

Now 25, Karl came to Australia having missed a year of soccer because of the political troubles at home during the Balkans war.

He received a bit of a shock in his first couple of games with the physical nature of the Premier League.

"After my first games here I thought, 'I don't want to play here!'.

"I got used to it but a lot of the tackling is clumsy and sometimes referees can't handle the game."

His ambition is, naturally, to play Ericsson Cup.

"The National League is a quality league, I want to play there."

Karl has not heard of any club interested in him though yet there is such an overseas exodus that it may just be a matter of time before he gets his chance.

"I'm waiting for someone," he says hopefully.

Both players rate their respective teams chances of winning the Grand Final highly.

"I reckon we can do it," says Karl with the confidence of anyone who has been a regular scorer.

"The finals are going to be very open, anyone can win, but we have the same chance as everyone."

Altona's form going into the finals has caused a little concern, but the final league game, a 6-1 win against South Dandenong, did the team a lot of good.

"The last four games before that we were ordinary. We'd lost our shape and were a bit complacent, we can't always play the game (coach) Ian Dobson wants us to play.

"I think we've got a good chance, if we get to the Grand Final it will be our fourth in a row, not to many teams would have done that."

By the time you read this the first of the finals would have been played and these two fine strikers — one a relative newcomer and the other a with plenty of Australian experience — will be hoping that their season has not quite finished yet.

After the finals there is the Ericsson Cup and a good showing in the VPL Finals could be just the ticket for these two personalities of the Premier League.

Tales from the Bean Bag

"Confessions of a Coach Potato"

By A.D. Akratos

This week's episode: *Coke is It*

"And the winner is Sy-de-ne-y!"

It's about 4.30 a.m (or some similar ridiculous time) a couple of years ago and I find myself slack-jawed and hollow-eyed staring at the small screen as Mr Samaranch declares to world that the Olympics are coming to the magic land of Oz. It takes a couple of minutes for the news to sink. Yay for us. And back to bed I go.

Time warp to the present. Early evening one night last week as I once again find myself slack jawed and hollowed eyed looking at the idiot box once agian. And guess what? Our old mate Sammy is on again. And this time he's orating on the benefits of steroids and their acceptance in the sporting world, but only as long as they don't cause permanent damage/mutations/death etc to the himbo using these illegal substances.

Spice Girls espouse clean living, so should you

What??? Personally I believe that the only (recreational or performance enhancing) drugs a person should be allowed to take are those that do cause permanent damage/mutations/death to the individual. Preferably over a long period of time and involving excrusiating pain in large doses. If one is stupid enough to dabble in these substances then one must be rewarded for their stupidity. But I digress.

So all this week a subtle change has been taking place all over the sporting world. Pics of Playboy Playmates no longer adorn the locker rooms of the Knights as these have been replaced by (artistic) shots of Sammy. Ben Johnson is preparing a "comeback" interview with the following opening phrase" I was robbed! I was a pioneer, a man ahead of my time, trailblazing the brave new world of steroids and what was my reward? Bans, loss of metals and loss of ewndorsements! Where be my glory? Where be my fans? I tell you, I was robbed!" And in a certain South American country, the world's second greatest player of all time is preparing yet another cocaine- fuelled comeback.

Time warp ahead (again) to the 2006 World Cup and once again football has come home to the land of the bovver boy and warm beer. The fans are the same, the passion the same but game is no longer the same. Behold the introduction of "improvements" that have made the game a much better proposition for all and sundry. Ideas from USA 94 have been used and the goals are now two times larger and each goal is worth three points except those scored from beyond the half line which are worth five. The offside rule has been abandoned and so have throw ins (replaced by kick-ins), hence the game flows constantly with little interuption (unless a player is tackled from behind and all players get sent off). Average scores are 6-4 and all teams no have ten strikers.

But best of all, FIFA is no loner a boys club only where one has to be 100 years old to join but rather is a yong man's game with an 18 year old president with his finger on the pulse of today's youth.

And who do we have to thank? Our old friend Sammy and that off-the-cuff remark back in 1998.

FIFA, not being slouches, quickly see the potential in widespread drug abuse. A quick phone to a certain ex-player, a couple of phone calls to Columbia and the Mexican Flea powder is on its way. A new independent body to replace the old drug testing one is quickly set up and the use of drugs in professional soccer is under control and regulated by strict FIFA guidelines. Naturally, only the finest will do for the finest athletes and so those mega-rich paypackets find themselves hijacked and on their way to Columbia (minus a small transaction fee deposited in Geneva).

Naturally, free samples were made available for extensive testing to FIFA and pretty soon all the reps started turning up in hawaian shirts and with big smiles. Steroids quickly were abandoned due to side affects but Mexican Marching Powder...ohhhh yeahhhh baby! Gotta give me more of the gooooood stuff! So young urban entrepeneurs abandoned lucrative careers in the car stealing industry and entered the multi-dimensional and murky world of soccer politics and pretty soon FIFA becomes a young man's game. Oh yeah, the babes were allowed in too.

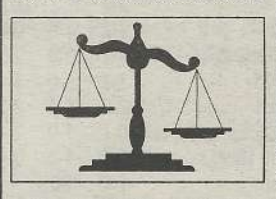
Naturally these revolutionary changes in the world game had an affect on the public. Watching players play while stoned week in, week out had an affect on the hero worshiping young and by the 2010 World Cup every man, woman, child (and pets), either playing or watching the game, was stoned for the month of July. And the sponsors of the glam sport were none others than the suppliers of the glam drug from Columbia.... oh yeah, coke is it.. and so is ecstacy, speed, etc. etc.....

Naturally with all the money being thrown about the mob tried to move in for a piece of the action. FIFA and the cartels resisted so World Cup 2014 becomes a bloodbath which spreads till the entire planet is involved in one huge war... know what I mean, Sammy's ill-concieved remarks were responsible for the total destruction of civilisation as we know it....

(Kids, the writer has been subdued and will be taking a nice long rest in a country hospital far from the stresses of city life for an indefinite period.

Just remember drugs and sport don't mix. Drugs cause lots and lots of damage to your bodies and can kill. So when the question comes up, there's only one answer.... JUST SAY NO TO DRUGS!!!)

SMYRNIS
& Co SOLICITORS



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NSW STATE LEAGUES

SUPER LEAGUE ROUND 22

	1st	U/21	U/16
Parramatta v Eagles Suburbs	2-3	0-1	2-0
Bonnyrigg WE v St George Saints	4-0	5-0	2-1
Sutherland Sharks v Blacktown City	1-5	2-3	0-5
Canterbury Berries v Macarthur Rams	1-0	0-3	0-2
Central Coast v Bankstown City	0-4	1-1	1-2
Ryde City v Parramatta Eagles	1-2	2-4	0-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Blacktown City	22	13	5	4	46	25	21	44
Bonnyrigg WE	21	13	4	4	47	23	24	43
Canterbury Berries	22	12	4	6	36	30	6	40
Macarthur Rams	21	12	3	6	36	29	7	39
Parramatta Eagles	21	11	4	6	47	30	17	37
Eastern Suburbs	21	17	3	7	48	31	17	36
Bankstown City	21	8	6	7	36	31	5	30
Leichhardt Tigers	21	8	6	7	32	32	0	30
Sutherland Shire	21	4	6	11	17	37	-20	18
Central Coast	21	4	3	14	24	43	-19	15
Ryde City Gunners	21	3	6	12	21	40	-19	15
St George Saints	21	1	4	16	17	56	-39	7

First Grade: Eastern Suburbs 3 (P Moss,54m J Bennett 56,64m) bt Parramatta Eagles 2 (S Petrovski 36,52m), Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4 (C Luff 24,39m, P Richardson 29,33m) bt St George Saints 0, Ryde City Gunners 2 (J Koch 11m pen, A Cetinay 25m) drew Leichhardt Tigers 2 (J Buonavoglia 54m, T Bazdaric 67m), Blacktown City 5 (S Cleary 9,44,60,70m, J Angelucci 69m) bt Sutherland Sharks 1 (C Hobbs 87m), Canterbury Berries 1 (S Hantzis 72m) bt Macarthur Rams 0, Bankstown City 4 (M Hawrysiul 37,61, M Lozevski 27,50m) bt Central Coast 0,Parramatta Eagles 2 (S Karavatakis 36/42m) bt Ryde City 1 (J Koch 83m).

UNDER 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	21	16	2	3	51	22	29	50
Bonnyrigg WE	20	15	2	3	69	20	49	47
Blacktown City	22	14	4	4	54	31	23	46
Macarthur Rams	21	13	2	6	52	24	28	41
Eastern Suburbs	20	11	4	5	43	26	17	37
St George Saints	21	9	2	10	34	43	-9	29
Canterbury Berries	22	8	2	12	35	41	-5	26
Leichhardt Tigers	21	7	4	10	37	41	-4	25
Bankstown City	21	6	3	12	31	43	-12	21
Ryde City Gunners	21	4	3	14	25	55	-30	15
Sutherland Shire	21	4	2	15	24	60	-36	14
Central Coast	21	2	4	15	24	73	-49	10

U/21: Eastern Suburbs 1 bt Parramatta Eagles 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 5 bt St George Saints 0, Ryde City Gunners 3 bt Leichhardt Tigers 2, Blacktown City 3 bt Sutherland Sharks 2, Macarthur Rams 3 bt Canterbury Berries 0, Central Coast 1 drew Bankstown City 1, Parramatta Eagles 4 bt Ryde City 2.

UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	21	16	4	1	53	10	43	52
Bankstown City	21	13	5	3	47	18	29	44
Blacktown City	22	13	4	5	47	20	27	43
Macarthur Rams	21	11	5	5	35	22	13	38
Ryde City Gunners	21	10	5	6	32	26	6	35
Leichhardt Tigers	21	8	6	7	36	34	2	30
Eastern Suburbs	20	7	7	6	33	35	-2	28
Bonnyrigg WE	20	8	3	9	38	38	0	27
St George Saints	21	6	5	10	38	36	2	23
Central Coast	21	3	4	14	25	40	-15	13
Canterbury Berries	22	2	4	16	15	57	-42	10
Sutherland Shire	21	1	4	16	15	78	-63	7

U/18: Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Eastern Suburbs 0, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 bt St George Saints 1, Ryde City Gunners 3 bt Leichhardt Tigers 1, Blacktown City 5 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, Macarthur Rams 2 bt Canterbury Berries 0, Bankstown City 2 bt Central Coast 1, Parramatta Eagles 1 bt Ryde City 0.

DIVISION ONE ROUND 26

	1st	U/21	U/18
Penrith Panthers v AC United	1-2	1-0	0-4
Moorebank Sports v Belmore Hercules	4-1	3-0	2-0
Manly Warringah v Bathurst '75	3-2	3-0	1-1
Hurstville City v Auburn United	2-0	6-1	2-2
Hills United v Fairfield Bulls	0-1	7-0	2-4
Rockdale City Suns v Stanmore Hawks	5-1	1-3	0-4
Moorebank Sports v AC United	1-1	00	
Belmore Hercules v Fairfield Bulls	1-2	0-3	1-3
Penrith Panthers v Moorebank Sports	3-2	2-4	1-0

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE - FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	DIF	PTS
FAIRFIELD BULLS	25	19	3	3	53	22	31	60
HURSTVILLE CITY	25	18	2	5	54	27	27	56
STANMORE HAWKS	26	17	2	7	54	30	24	53
MANLY WARRINGAH	26	12	7	7	48	31	17	43
AUBURN UNITED	26	11	6	9	44	40	4	39
PENRITH PANTHERS	25	10	5	10	34	30	4	35
ROCKDALE CITY SUNS	25	10	3	12	49	46	3	33
MOOREBANK SPORTS	26	9	6	11	33	39	-6	33
ILLAWARRA LIONS	25	8	8	9	31	30	1	32
BATHURST'75	25	8	7	10	26	34	-8	31
AC UNITED	26	7	9	10	42	48	-6	30
HILLS UNITED	26	5	5	16	29	59	-30	20
MT PRITCHARD	25	4	5	16	33	57	-24	17
BELMORE HERCULES	25	3	6	16	24	61	-37	15

Tigers get out of Ryde Jail

By John Economos

RYDE CITY, despite their low position on the ladder gallantly frightened the daylights out of the Leichhardt Tigers racing to a 2-0 lead 18 minutes before halftime. Only a second half fightback by the Tigers enabled them to scramble to a 2-2 draw last Sunday at Lambert Park.

John Koch drew first blood for Ryde City in the 11th minute scoring through a penalty. In fact it was the clever Koch who earned the spot kick as he frustrated Leichhardt's defender Anthony Tesoro into fouling him inside the box.

Ironically though it should have been Leichhardt that opened the scoring as young striker Leon Alexiou, following a corner, head-glanced perilously close over the horizontal.

Leichhardt's mobile John Buonavoglia in the 14th minute blasted on target from the left, only to draw a fine save from Ryde's custodian Ben Hopkins.

Worse was to come for Leichhardt as in the 27th minute a long ball ballooned forward by Ryde from the left side, found striker Adam Cetinay racing through.

With Bobby Catlin racing off his line to the looming danger, Cetinay composed himself to easily lob him from the edge of the box and thus double Ryde's lead.

Leichhardt's first half marking and ball-service to their strikers lacked quality and competitiveness as Ryde now seemed to be coasting to victory.

However the second half was turned around as Leichhardt slowly but surely asserted its authority, gallantly inspired by the honest fighting efforts of central midfielder Tommy Bazdaric .

Nine minutes into the second session Leichhardt scored the best goal of the match. Gaining possession well out Buonavoglia steamed unheeded 40 metres up centre-field to knock forward to striker David Petrini inside the box who barely was able to fumble the ball back for the mobile Buonavoglia to blast first time into the target.

That goal seemed to inject and ignite much needed life into Leichhardt and three minutes later Bazdaric 'levelled the books' at 2-2 with another fine goal.

Gathering possession out on the right, the robust Bazdaric bulldozed his way through the box to slam home the life-saving equaliser.

Ryde who had also played a previously postponed match against Parramatta Eagles just 72 hours prior, understandably wilted in the second half as Leichhardt started to run riot desperately seeking a winner.

In the 65th minute it was the unlucky Alexiou who yet again was denied any joy as he exploded a violent drive from 15 metres forcing Hopkins to palm it onto his right post.

Outstanding for Ryde was right defender Nils Johnsson whilst Leichhardt's best were central midfielder Tommy Bazdaric, linkman John Buonavoglia, whilst inexperienced teenage striker David Petrini did everything asked of him.

Ryde's coach Les DeCelis later stated to ABSW: "We were good in the first half but fell away in the second and I was most disappointed to give away our two goal lead. But in the end I was happy to get away with a draw."

Meanwhile Leichhardt's coach Arno Bertogna summed it up as: "It was a game of two halves in which we only became competitive in the second. Players have to take responsibility at this level. To be competitive cannot be taught. The player must want to be competitive, it's as simple as that."

RYDE CITY: Hopkins, Johnsson,Moffit, Miranda, Shipley, Cowley: Studds-Mills, Kelly, Peatey: Cetinay(Boudaher 67th), Koch.

LEICHHARDT TIGERS: Catlin, Treharne (Lamacchia 84th), Milicevic, Pettanon, Tesoro: Guzzo (Hristodoulou 46th), Bazdaric, Savoca: Petrini (Totaro 82nd), Buonavoglia, Alexiou.

Scorers: Ryde City: Koch 11th penalty, Cetinay 27th. Leichhardt Tigers: Buonavoglia 54th and Bazdaric 57th.

Referee: M.Breeze.

DIV 1: First Grade: AC Unite2 (S Zullo 64m, C Gibson 80m) bt Penrith Panthers 1 (J Martinez 90m), Moorebank Sports 4 (L Merlino 10,51,56,80m) bt Belmore Hercules 1 (S Solidakis 31m), Manly Warringah 3 (M Beldham 28m, S Millar 62m, D Barbalace 72m) bt Bathurst '75 2 (D Kostich 2m L Ackland 43m), Hurstville City 2 (T Pontidas 32m, J Iliopoulos 55m) bt Auburn United 0, Fairfield Bulls 1 (S Talevski 42m) bt Hills United 0, Mt Pritchard 1 (J Bruni 81m) drew Illawarra Lions 1 (D Toveski 60m), Rockdale City Suns 5 (I Macdonald 7,26m, B Petrovski 58m, G Trposki 80m, S Najdoski 86m) bt Stanmore Hawks 1 (E Briscoe 60m), Moorebank Sports 1 (A Versi 68m) drew AC United 1 (Z Younan 80m), Fairfield Bulls 2 (S Talevski 73m, A Zizic 90m) bt Belmore Hercules 1 (S Solidakis 25m), Penrith Panthers 3 (G Tehliwec 18m, R Astone 71m, D Hinton 81m) bt Moorebank 2 (A Versi 13m, G Potts 75m).

UNDER 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Hills United	26	16	6	4	56	21	35	54
Manly Warringah	25	15	5	5	53	26	27	50
Fairfield Bulls	25	14	7	4	76	30	46	49
Moorebank Sports	26	12	10	4	52	34	18	46
AC United	26	12	8	5	44	29	15	44
Rockdale City Suns	25	12	5	8	70	48	22	41
Penrith Panthers	25	11	7	7	43	32	11	41
Mt Pritchard	25	10	3	12	57	52	5	33
Stanmore Hawks	26	10	3	13	41	42	-1	33
Auburn United	26	9	3	14	58	76	-18	30
Hurstville City	25	9	2	14	43	65	-22	29
Belmore Hercules	25	4	3	18	27	68	-41	15
Illawarra Lions	25	0	0	25	19	119	-100	0

U/21: Moorebank Sports 0 drew AC United 0, Fairfield Bulls 3 bt Belmore Hercules 0, Moorebank Sports 4 bt Penrith Panthers 2, Penrith Panthers 1 bt AC United 0, Manly Warringah 3 bt Bathurst '75 0, Hurstville City 6 bt Auburn United 1, Hills United 0 drew Fairfield Bulls 0, Mt Pritchard 7 bt Illawarra Lions 0, Stanmore Hawks 3 bt Rockdale City Suns 1.

UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Bathurst '75	25	16	6	3	53	25	28	54
Manly Warringah	25	16	4	5	60	22	38	52
Illawarra Lions	25	16	3	6	78	39	39	51
Stanmore Hawks	26	16	3	7	52	30	22	51
AC United	25	14	3	8	52	35	27	45
Moorebank Sports	26	14	3	9	52	33	19	45
Hills United	26	12	8	6	52	35	17	44
Fairfield Bulls	25	13	3	9	40	37	3	42
Mt Pritchard	25	12	3	10	43	30	13	39
Penrith Panthers	24	10	3	11	35	41	-6	33
Rockdale City Suns	25	5	5	15	46	61	-15	20
Belmore Hercules	24	4	1	19	30	76	-46	13
Hurstville City	25	1	5	19	23	84	-61	8
Auburn United	26	0	4	22	20	98	-78	4

U/18: Fairfield Bulls 3 bt Belmore Hercules 1, Penrith Panthers 1 bt Moorebank Sports 0, AC United 4 bt Penrith Panthers 0, Moorebank Sports 2 bt Belmore Hercules 0, Manly Warringah 1 drew Bathurst '75 1, Hurstville City 2 drew Auburn United 2, Hills United 1 drew Fairfield Bulls 1, Illawarra Lions 4 bt Mt Pritchard 2, Stanmore Hawks 4 bt Rockdale City Suns 0

DIVISION 2 ROUND 22

	1st	U21	U18
Dulwich Hills v Hadjuk Wanderers	0-0	0-3	1-2
Parramatta City v University of NSW	3-1	1-5	1-0
Mt Druitt Town Rangers v Gladesville United	2-2	3-0	2-1
Arncliffe Scots v Greystanes	3-2	1-3	1-3
Liverpool City v Alexander Warriors	1-1	10-0	3-0
Sydney District v Hurstville ZSC	0-5	2-1	3-1
Parramatta City v Hajduk Wanderers	2-4	0-7	1-9

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Hajduk Wanderers	21	16	5	0	60	12	48	53
Dulwich Hill	21	16	5	0	58	16	42	53
Hurstville ZSC	20	12	5	3	49	27	22	41
Arncliffe Scots	21	10	2	9	44	39	5	32
Sydney District	21	10	1	10	29	38	-9	31
Greystanes	22	9	3	10	43	40	3	30
Alexander Warriors	20	8	2	10	40	41	-1	23
Mt Druitt Town	20	5	6	9	33	40	-7	21
Parramatta City	21	5	13	13	28	52	-24	18
Gladesville United	21	4	5	12	31	54	-23	17
Liverpool City	22	4	14	14	25	48	-23	16
Uni of NSW	20.	5	1	14	18	51	-33	13

First Grade: Hurstville ZSC 5 bt Sydney District 0, Liverpool City 1 drew Alexander Warriors 1, Hajduk Wanderers 4 bt Parramatta City 2, Dulwich Hill 0 drew Hajduk Wanderers 0, Parramatta City 3 bt University of NSW 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2 drew Gladesville United 2, Arncliffe Scots 3 bt Greystanes 2.

See pages 19-30 for the Global Game. ABSW's World News with reports and analysis from Africa Asia Latin America Greece Uk Italy USA & Europe

NSW STATE LEAGUES

UNDER 21

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Hajduk Wanderers	21	18	0	3	104	16	88	54
Greystanes	21	17	1	3	40	21	19	52
Dulwich Hill	21	12	4	5	56	25	31	40
Mt Druitt Town	20	11	4	5	50	30	20	37
Uni of NSW	19	9	3	7	30	25	5	30
Liverpool City	21	6	6	9	48	49	-1	24
Hurstville ZSC	20	7	1	12	38	46	-8	22
sydney District	21	6	4	11	21	61	-40	22
Gladesville United	21	5	5	11	32	50	-18	20
Parramatta City	21	5	3	13	29	54	-25	18
Alexander Warriors	20	5	2	13	27	59	-32	17
Arncliffe Scots	20	4	3	13	20	59	-39	15

U/21: Hajduk Wanderers 7 bt Parramatta City 0, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 3 bt Gladesville United 0, Hajduk Wanderers 3 bt Dulwich Hill 0, University of NSW 5 bt Parramatta City 1, Greystanes 3 bt Arncliffe Scots 1, Liverpool City 10 bt Alexander Warriors 0, Sydney District 2 bt Hurstville ZSC 1.

UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Mt Druitt Town	20	18	1	1	67	8	59	55
Hajduk Wanderers	21	16	3	2	105	15	90	51
Liverpool City	21	15	2	4	47	14	33	47
Sydney District	20	15	1	4	54	25	29	46
Gladesville United	21	12	2	7	671	22	39	38
Greystanes	21	11	1	9	54	24	30	34
Parramatta City	20	9	1	10	44	46	-2	28
Dulwich Hill	21	7	2	12	39	31	8	23
Hurstville ZSC	20	5	2	13	23	40	-17	17
Arncliffe Scots	20	4	0	16	20	106	-86	12
Uni Of NSW 20	3	1	16	22	53	-31	10	
Alexander Warriors	21	0	0	21	4	156	-152	0

U/18: Sydney District 2 bt Hurstville ZSC 1, Hajduk Wanderers 9 bt Parramatta City 1, Mt Druitt Town Rangers 2 bt Gladesville United 1, Hajduk Wanderers 2 bt Dulwich Hill 1, Parramatta City 1 bt University of NSW 0, Greystanes 3 bt Arncliffe Scots 1, Liverpool City 3 bt Alexander Warriors 0.

DIVISION THREE ROUND 20

	1st	2nd
Sydney University v Flamencos	3-2	0-2
Maroubra v Trasandinos	3-1	1-1
Hakoah v Glebe Wanderers	1-0	3-4
Hawkesbury City v Colo Colo	1-2	0-2
Granville Greenisland v White City	6-0	1-6
Prospect United v Camden Tigers	3-6	0-1

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sydney University	19	13	2	4	59	28	31	41
Colo Colo	20	12	1	7	40	33	7	37
Camden Tigers	18	10	3	5	45	37	8	33
Maroubra United	19	10	2	7	55	39	16	32
Glebe Wanderers	19	9	4	6	36	34	2	31
Trasandinos	18	7	6	5	32	32	0	267
Flamencos	19	7	2	10	37	39	-2	23
White City	19	6	5	8	31	50	-19	23
Granville Greensland	18	5	5	8	37	46	-9	20
Hakoah	18	6	1	11	31	41	-10	19
Prospect United	19	5	3	11	31	40	-9	18
Hawkesbury City	18	5	0	13	26	41	-15	15

First Grade: Sydney University 3 bt Flamencos 2, Maroubra United 3 bt Transandinos 1, Hakoah 1 bt Glebe Wanderers 0, Colo Colo 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Granville Greenisland 6 bt White City 0, Camden Tigers 6 bt Prospect United 3. Second Grade: Flamencos 2 bt Sydney University 0, Maroubra United 1 drew Transandinos 1, Glebe Wanderers 4 bt Hakoah 3, Colo Colo 2 bt Hawkesbury City 0, White City 6 bt Granville Greenisland 1, Camden Tigers 1 bt Prospect United 0.

SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Flamencos	19	13	2	4	44	23	21	41
Glebe Wanderers	19	12	4	13	37	16	21	40
Prospect United	19	10	4	5	34	18	16	34
White City	19	10	2	7	48	36	12	32
Trasandinos	18	8	4	6	31	29	2	28
Sydney University	19	7	6	6	35	27	8	27
Colo Colo	20	8	3	9	33	41	-8	27
Camden Tigers	18	6	4	8	29	32	-3	22
Granville Greenslannd	18	3	4	9	22	33	-11	19
Maroubra United	19	5	3	11	26	44	-18	18
Hakoah	18	4	3	11	24	43	-19	15
Hawkesbury City	18	3	3	12	15	36	-21	12

DIVISION FOUR ROUND 21

FIRST GRADE

	1st	2nd
Nepean District v Balmain Tigers	4-0	2-0
Sydney Crescent Star v Earlwood Hermes	w/o	3/0
Lithgow Workmen v Prairiewood United	1-4	0-4
Springwood v Fraser Park	2-6	0-1
Holy Cross Ryde v Fairfield Kings	1-3	2-0
Marrickville v CSI Schofield	3-1	2-1
St Josephs v United Eagles	2-0	5-4

First Grade : Sydney Crescent Star v. Earlwood Hermes p/p, Nepean District 4 bt Balmain Tigers 0, Prairiewood United 4 bt Lithgow Workmen 1, Fraser Park 6 bt Springwood 2, Fairfield Kings 3 bt Holy Cross Ryde 1, Marrickville 3 bt CSI Schofield 1, St Josephs 2 bt United Eagles 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fraser Park	20	16	3	1	63	17	46	51
Prairiewood United	19	11	8	0	53	24	29	41
Marrickville	20	9	6	5	41	25	16	33
Fairfield City Kings	19	9	5	5	37	20	17	32
Holy Cross ryde	19	9	5	5	39	-1	32	
Sydney Crescent Star	19	10	2	7	38	39	-1	32
Nepean Distrcit	19	9	3	7	30	21	9	30
St Josephs	19	7	6	6	31	34	-3	27
CSI Schofields	19	8	2	9	35	35	0	26
Springwood	19	6	3	10	37	42	-5	21
Balmain Tigers	19	5	4	10	35	38	-3	19
United Eagles	19	4	7	8	27	32	-5	19
Lithgow Workmen's	20	2	1	17	20	71	-51	7
Earlwood Hermes	18	1	1	16	13	77	-64	4

SECOND GRADE UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Fraser Park	20	13	6	1	49	21	28	45
Nepean District	20	14	2	4	48	14	44	44
Balmain Tigers	19	10	5	4	39	17	22	35
Holy Cross Ryde	19	10	5	4	40	22	18	35
Prairiewood United	20	10	4	6	54	33	21	34
Marrickville	20	10	2	8	43	37	6	32
Springwood	19	9	4	6	52	29	23	31
CSI Schofields	19	7	4	8	38	37	1	25
St Josephs	19	7	3	9	46	49	-3	24
Fairfield City Kings	19	6	4	9	33	45	-12	22
Lithgow Workmen's	20	6	2	12	36	60	-24	20
United Eagles	19	5	3	112	38	72	-34	18
Sydney Crescent Star	20	4	0	16	35	87	-52	12
Earlwood Hermes	19	3	0	16	19	57	-38	9

Second Grade: Nepean District 2 bt Balmain Tigers 0, Sydney Crescent Star 3 bt Earlwood Hermes 0, Prairiewodd United 4 bt Lithgow Workmen 0, Fraser Park 1 bt Springwood 0, Holy Cross Ryde 2 bt Fairfield Kings 0, Marrickville 2 bt CSI Schofield 1, St Josephs 5 bt United Eagles 4.

DIVISION FIVE ROUND 20

FIRST GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Eastern Creek Pioneer	15	10	4	1	35	18	17	34
Auburn Star	16	9	5	2	32	15	17	32
White Valley	16	7	5	4	22	17	5	26
AVA United	16	6	4	6	36	29	7	22
Bossy	17	5	6	6	28	32	-4	21
Racing	15	4	8	3	26	20	6	20
Sporting SCC	16	5	5	6	27	31	-4	20
Kosciusko	16	8	2	6	39	36	3	19
Homenetmen	15	4	4	7	29	39	-10	16
Liverpool Olympic	16	2	78	7	25	27	-2	13
Liverpool Warriors	16	1	2	13	16	51	-35	5

First Grade: Racing 3 bt Bossy 2, AVA United 4 bt Liverpool Warriors 2, Eastern Creek Pioneers 3 bt Kosciuszko 1, Auburn Star 0 drew White Valley 0, Sporting SCC vs Liverpool Olympic p/p.

SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
AVA United	16	11	1	4	40	18	22	34
Auburn Star	16	10	2	4	49	28	21	32
Liverpool Olympic	16	9	3	4	47	22	25	30
White Valley	16	9	3	4	40	26	14	30
Eastern Creek Pioneer	15	9	2	4	37	24	13	29
Sporting SCC	15	9	2	4	39	30	9	29
Racing	15	6	1	8	40	32	8	19
Kosciusko	16	4	5	7	34	46	-12	17
Homenetmen	15	4	2	9	27	38	-11	14
Liverpool Warriors	16	2	2	12	11	50	-39	8
Bossy	16	1	1	14	11	61	-50	4

	1st	2nd
Racing v Bossy	3-2	8-1
Sporting SCC v Liverpool Olympic	P/P	P/P
Liverpool Warriors v AVA United	2-4	0-7
Kosciuszko v Eastern Creek Pioneers	1-3	2-3
Auburn Star v White Valley	0-0	3-1
Bye - Homenetmen		

Second Grade: Racing 8 bt Bossy 1, AVA United 7 bt Liverpool Warriors 0, Eastern Creek Pioneers 3 bt Kosciuszko 2, Auburn Star 3 bt White Valley 1, Sporting SCC vs Liverpool Olympic p/p.

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION ONE

UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
NNSW ITC/Academy	15	12	3	0	57	8	49	39
NSW INST/Academy	14	12	2	0	73	7	66	38
Sutherland Sharks	16	10	3	3	44	15	29	33
Sydney United	15	10	1	4	65	18	47	31
Marconi Fairfield	15	9	3	3	68	14	54	30
UWS Macarthur	17	6	1	10	38	66	-28	19
Gladesville Ravens	15	5	1	9	23	53	-30	16
Moorebank Sports	14	2	1	11	13	59	167	
Nepean Panthers	15	1	2	12	16	80	-64	5
Eastern Suburbs	16	0	1	15	7	84	-77	1

SECOND GRADE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Sutherland Sharks	16	12	1	3	73	15	58	37
Marconi Fairfield	15	11	2	2	39	9	30	35
NNSW ITC/Academy	14	10	2	2	53	14	39	32
Gladesville Ravens	15	9	3	3	40	17	23	30
Sydney United	15	9	2	4	51	15	36	29
Eastern Suburbs	16	6	3	7	22	18	4	21
NSW INST/Academy	14	6	0	8	38	27	11	18
Moorebank Sports	13	2	0	11	7	50	-13	6
Nepean Panthers	15	2	0	10	83	-73	6	
UWS Macarthur	17	1	1	15	6	91	-85	4

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE DIVISION TWO

UNDER 18

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Central Coast WSA	17	16	1	0	83	13	70	49
Shoalhaven Assoc	17	11	4	2	50	14	36	37
Manly Warringah	17	11	3	3	46	24	22	36
St George Assoc	17	10	3	4	40	18	22	33
Roselands	16	6	4	6	39	35	4	22
Bathurst City	17	6	3	8	40	44	-4	21
Wollongong City	16	3	4	9	24	31	-7	13
Gladesville Ravens	16	3	2	11	-13	37	-24	1`1
Sutherland Shire	16	3	1	12	26	53	-27	10
Bankstown City	15	0	1	14	10	102	-92	1

WOMEN'S STATE LEAGUE - DIV 1: First Grade: NNSW ITC 3 bt Gladesville Ravens 1, Sutherland Shire 5 bt Moorebank Sports 0, NSW ITC/Academy 3 bt Nepean Panthers 0, NNSW ITC 3 bt Sydney United 2, Marconi 8 bt Eastern Suburbs 0. Second Grade: NNSW ITC 2 bt Gladesville Ravens 2, Sutherland Shire 9 bt Moorebank Sports 0, NSW ITC/Academy 3 bt Nepean Panthers 0, NNSW ITC 1 bt Sydney United 0, Marconi 1 bt Eastern Suburbs 0. DIV 2: First Grade: Gladesville Ravens 5 bt Bankstown City 0, Sutherland Shire 2 bt Roselands 0, Bathurst City 0 drew Manly Warringah 0, Central Coast WSA 3 bt St George 0.

NSW Soccer Federation

SUPER LEAGUE
ROUND 21

Sunday August 9

Parramatta Eagles v Bonnyrigg WE
Melita Stadium, 3pm

St George Saints v Ryde City
St George Stadium, 3pm

Leichhardt Tigers v Sutherland Sharks
Lambert Park, 3pm

Macarthur Rams v Bankstown City
Lynwood Park, 3pm

Eastern Suburbs v Central Coast
Wentworth Park, 3pm

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AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S SOCCER ASSOCIATION

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S SOCCER ASSOCIATION

FOUR OF AUSTRALIA'S BEST!

Butland, Joanne
Nickname: Jo
State: Qld
Age: 19
Hometown: Cairns
Canberra Home: AIS Residence
Work/Study in Canberra: Studying Bachelor of Education (Primary) at Uni of Canberra.
Interests/Relaxation: Playing on computers, watching movies, anything away from soccer.
Goals at AIS: Just to improve my individual skills, speed, agility. Major goal is to make the World Cup Qualifiers team.

Gegenhuber, Sonia
Nickname: Gegs or Sonnie
State: Qld
Age: 27
Hometown: Mannum, SA
Canberra Home: AIS Residence
Work/Study in Canberra: Varies — teaching, gym reception, whatever's going.
Interests/Relaxation: Sleep, watching friends play sports, drawing, shopping.
Goals at AIS: To improve my ball awareness and skills. To stay in the team up to the Olympics. To stay injury free.

Youman, Shelley
Nickname: Bezon
State: NNSW
Age: 31
Hometown: Newcastle
Canberra Home: House in Canberra with the family.
Work/Study in Canberra: Mother of three
Interests/Relaxation: Running, reading.
Goals at AIS: To make the team for the World Cup and help the team win the World Cup.

Revell, Kim
Nickname: Kimmo
State: Qld
Age: 23
Hometown: Brisbane
Canberra Home: House in Canberra.
Work/Study in Canberra: Maintenance work at Canberra Motor Village.
Interests/Relaxation: Shopping, watching videos.
Goals at AIS: To be fitter, and increase my team understanding.

MIA MANIA POWERS US SOCCER

Compiled by ABSW and US internet Soccer sites

Loaded with talented players like Mia Hamm, Kristine Lilly, Michelle Akers and Julie Foudy — household names to the over seven million girls who play soccer in this country — the US national team, first assembled in 1985, won the first ever Women's World Cup in 1991 and Olympic gold two years ago in Atlanta.

Last week the team added a Goodwill Games gold medal to its trophy case after defeating China 2-0 in the final. Next summer, the team hopes to have similar success at the 1999 Women's World Cup, to be held in the United States. Of course Australia are competing but the US would have to be favourites.

Nevertheless, the success of women's soccer in the US has come despite the lack of a professional league. Unlike women's basketball, which currently has two pro leagues (the American Basketball League and the Women's NBA), women's soccer has had trouble forming one of its own.

With the absence of a league, the national team is at a clear disadvantage to other countries like Germany and Norway, which have strong leagues from which they can further develop talent for their national team program.

"After college we are losing that because these other countries have a league and we don't," said Hamm, a former North Carolina All-American on one of the many US internet sites dedicated to Soccer.

Many believe that the United States Soccer Federation has failed to sanction or create a professional women's league for fear that it may cut into the profits of Major League Soccer, the still-developing three-year-old professional men's league.

Following the success at the Olympics, sponsors such as Nike had planned to have an eight-team league up and running by this summer but the idea never came to flourish.

And despite the popularity of the women's game, it is unclear whether there's a large enough fan-base to sustain a profitable league.

"Anyone can start a pro league," said Kimberly Shaw, coach of the Cleveland Eclipse, one of 34 teams to play in the W-League, a five-year-old developmental women's minor league system. "But the real question is can it survive financially over time."

Others said it would be best to launch a pro league following next summer's Women's World Cup, as was done with Major League Soccer after the 1994 World Cup.

"The Women's World Cup next year will see what kind of crowds can be attracted," Shaw said.

But how has the national team been able to excel for so long without a pro league?

Peter Amos, part-owner and general manager of New York Magic of the W-League, said that in this country "female athletes are not only widely accepted, but they are encouraged and promoted. I believe this big picture has the largest part to do with our success."

Michael Sabatelle, women's coach at Emory University (Ga.) and for the Atlanta Classics, also of the W-League, said the team's success will only make the sport even more popular among girls.

"Younger players have now had female role models playing at the highest level in the world for eight years," he said.

Added Hamm: "As soccer players growing up, we didn't have female role models to look up to. One of the reasons we have been so successful is because our youth programs are strong."

See the USA page in the Global Game section for more Mia Mania.

In other news, the on again off again African World Cup qualifiers have been changed again, this time to 17-30 October in Nigeria

SOCCER CANBERRA

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By Graham Cooke

'GET ON BOARD' CANBERRANS TOLD

The targets are the mums and dads who drop their kids off at soccer and go shopping; the former players, some of them stars, who openly admit they have not gone to a game since hanging up their boots; even those who have never watched a football being kicked in anger in their lives.

All these, and anyone else who cared to listen, was invited to 'Get On Board' during a smooth and professional marketing launch of the game in the ACT - the most ambitious project Soccer Canberra has attempted in its almost 40-year history.

Among proposals outlined by SC president Steve Doszpot:

*An aggressive public awareness campaign on radio and television spearheaded by a TV commercial produced by the top-line production company, National Recording Studios.

*A loyalty program which would reward companies and individuals who supported the code.

*An expansion in size and content of Soccer Canberra's fortnightly magazine, Capital Soccer, which is to be given away to all players, senior and junior.

*Greater accessibility to the media, including Australian and British Soccer Weekly, The Canberra Times, community newspapers, radio and television, and anyone who seeks information on the code for publication.

Doszpot announced the appointment of a marketing company, headed by Bruce James and Bobby Clark, to work on and fine tune the program.

He said that with interest in the game at an all-time high in the wake of the World Cup, now was the time to strike. He was in no doubt that soccer is the game of the future in Australia and quoted Cliff Smith, the managing director of the the ACT's major sponsor, Novell Australasia:

"Soccer is the sport of the new, networked world. It's the most supported sport on the globe and described my many as 'The World Game'.

Soccer has much in common with the Internet, both as a passport and a language to the world. It is a network of people connected by the skill of the game and by the rush of competition."

Doszpot said that while he desliked the overworked cliche about 'the sleeping giant' he now had more belief than ever before that soccer was ready to take off, throughout Australia and in particular in Canberra.

"Our task, as it has always been, is to ensure our vast numbers of junior players remain with the game past their 16th and 17th birthdays, and that these players, along with their friends and family, form the basis for support of the Canberra Cosmos at Bruce Stadium," he said.

Helping to perform the launch, ACT Senator Margaret Reid said that if just the Canberra viewing audience for the World Cup turned up at Bruce "the atmosphere would be electric".

The launch finished on a passionate and unrehearsed note as Cosmos coach Rale Rasic took the media to task for its "persistant negativity".

Angered by a question as to whether the launch was "the last throw of the dice" for the Cosmos, he said: "I will tell you this, we will not finish last, we will not finish second last and we will not finish third last, we will do much better than that.

"There are many people in this organisation who come to work at 9am and go home at 9pm, and they have created a wonderful thing which will link all the kids who play this game directly with the Cosmos.

"They should be congratulated and given a chance to make this work, not subjected to persistant negativity."

Rasic said his squad was now down to about two undecided places.

"There will be many changes - a great number of the old faces have gone and you will see some unfamiliar ones."

The latest 'new face' is in fact no stranger to ACT soccer. Gippsland Falcons defender Doug Marcina was raised in the area and came through the Canberra Deakin junior ranks.

He spent time at the Australian Institute of Sport and later rejoined Canberra Deakin in the NSW Superleague, leaving for the then Morwell Falcons only when it became apparent Deakin's own bid to join the national competition was not going to succeed.

Since the Cosmos came into the Ericsson Cup in 1995, Marcina has said he would prefer to play his football in the ACT, but believed he owed loyalty to Gippsland which had given him national league football when he had nowhere else to go. Now, he obviously feels that debt has been repaid.

Some of Canberra City's old National Soccer League stars - and one from the current Canberra Cosmos team - are rallying round to help save the ACT Premier League club from extinction.

Baz Giampaolo and Cosmos captain Norman Kelly will be the guest speakers, and Tony Brennan the master of ceremonies at a fund raising function at the City Club in Civic on Friday. For $30 supporters will get a meal and a good dose of nostalgia from Giampaolo and Brennan, who were team-mates at City when it was in the national competition during the 1970s and 80s.

City has been brought back from the brink of collapse by a sponsorship deal with the Canberra Institute of Technology, but with the licensed club trading in receivership, the longer-term future will depend on the ability of club members to raise money elsewhere.

However Brennan echoed the sentiments of many in the ACT soccer community when he said City must not be allowed to die.

"They brought national league soccer here and changed the face of the code in the ACT," he said.

"Both Baz and I remember those days as if they were five minutes ago, and I know there are plenty of others who feel the same. They were wonderful times...I wouldn't have missed them for quids."

UNIVERSITY STILL ALIVE

University of Canberra's hopes of staying in the ACT Premier League next season look a shade better this week after it battled to a 2-2 draw with Weston Creek Royals on Sunday.

It was only the third game this season in which the students have avoided defeat, but it is enough to give them some hope of catching the team nearest it at the bottom of the competition, Canberra City, whose troubles continued with a 4-2 loss to Queanbeyan City.

It has not been a lucky season for the University, but good fortune went its way in this game. Twice Royals' top scorer Steve Lazarri was through with just goalkeeper Troy Boots to beat. On each occasion Boots did the right thing, spread himself as much as possible, and managed to get in the way of the shot.

Then, a minute from the end, Lazarri weaved through the defence and drove the ball along the ground past Boots, only to see it rebound away off the base of the far post.

The students had taken a shock lead though Michael Duggan in the 13th minute, but just four minutes later Royals equalised when Boots could not hold a free kick from Martin Lazzari.

The Creek took the lead before half time as Ian Toms took advantage of a through pass from Steve Lazzari, but the last word belonged to University striker Simon Foxhill - a cheeky chip over goalkeeper Steve Wilkinson's head, just when it seemed as if another game had slipped away.

University coach Brian Watkins was in no doubt his team would escape the drop to Division Two, despite having Premiership contenders Monaro, Belconnen United and Capital City Suns as its next three opponents.

"It may well come down to the game with Canberra City on the last day of the season, but if the boys continue to put in the same kind of effort as they did today, we will get there," he said.

Monaro widened the gap at the top with a 1-0 win over the Suns - a game in which coach Ian Heywood had unstinted praise for goalkeeper Tony Guarino.

"He is without doubt the find of the season, considering he was only playing in the State League for Gungahlin Juventus last year," Heywood said.

"I didn't think it would be easy to replace Ben Harris when he left last season, but Tony has done the job."

Danny Serena was Monaro's scorer.

Canberra Olympic welcomed coach Vic Fernandez back from hospital with a 1-0 win over Canberra Deakin, although it was not one of his team's vintage performances.

However the good news for the club is that top scorer Marcello Fernandez, the coach's son, got back on to the park for 15 minutes after a month's lay-off through injury.

Eli Salloum provided the only goal of the game.

Queanbeyan City's win over Canberra City has just about ensured it will enjoy Premier League football again next year. Lazer Simeonov (2), Ty Tran, and David Geremia were the scorers, Paul Panebianco and Brett Chick replying for City.

*Gungahlin Juventus put a dent in Belconnen United's hopes of winning the premiership when the two teams fought out a 2-2 draw, writes Nick Guoth.

Some supurb goalkeeping from ACT representative Pedro Pavez and a penalty kept Juventus in the game as United exerted continuous pressure.

United was presented with scoring opportunities twice in the first half through defensive errors, but could not put the ball in the net.

Instead, and against the run of play, a long cross by Matt Valeri for Juventus found Lou Gaspari, whose shot wrong-footed Graham Nesbitt in goal.

Juventus continued to soak up the pressure until three minutes into the second half when Matt Whyte turned his man in the box and rifled home the equaliser.

Less than 10 minutes later Belconnen took the lead when the defence laid off Valerio Galeotti, allowing him to put Scott Manson through. Pavez saved the shot but Manson finished off.

Then a harmless corner was unnecessarily handled by Jason Dunn. Scott Conlon scored from the spot.

With 10 minutes remaining Dunn collected his second caution and was sent off. After surviving a number of Juventus raids, United nearly scored in the last minute, Pavez pulling off the save of the day.

Belconnen coach Lino Fiorese was disappointed with the result. "We created a number of chances but did not capitalise," he said. On the other side, Walter Valeri thought the result fair and commended the good efforts of his team.

*In a prelude to what may be the Second Division grand final, ANU showed too much strength to beat Burns Club 2-0. The result puts ANU two points clear of Burns with a game in hand and four rounds to go.

Scott Channing opened the scoring in the 16th minute after a lay-off from Michael Wiseman which finished a well-worked passing move from the students.

In the last few minutes a Channing shot was too hot to handle for the Burns 'keeper and Scott Haig put away the rebound.

NOVELL ACT P/L

Division One
Round 15 Sunday, August 9

Belconnen United	v	Weston Creek Royals	Hawker Oval
Canberra City	v	Gungahlin Juventus	Majura Oval
Canberra Deakin	v	Queanbeyan City	Deakin Oval
Monaro	v	Canberra Olympic	High Street
Capital City Suns	v	Uni of Canberra	O'Connor Oval

Firsts 2pm, Under 23 noon.

Division Two
Round 18 Saturday, August 8

Cooma	v	Defence Academy	Nijong Oval
Canberra Defence	v	ANU	RMC Oval
Burns Club	v	O'Connor Knights	Kambah Oval No 2 (2)
Tuggeranong Utd	v	White Eagles	Kambah Oval No 2 (1)

Firsts 3pm, Under 23 1pm.

Division 1

Gungahlin Juventus	2	Belconnen United	2
Queanbeyan City	4	Canberra City	2
Canberra Olympic	1	Canberra Deakin	0
Weston Creek Royals	2	University of Canberra	2
Capital City Suns	0	Monaro	1

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	PTS
Monaro	14	8	6	0	0	34	13	36
Belconnen United	13	8	4	0	1	34	14	32
Canberra Olympic	14	9	2	0	3	35	21	31
Capital City Suns	14	7	3	1	3	33	22	28
Gungahlin Juventus	14	5	3	2	4	30	17	23
Weston Creek Royals	14	6	2	0	6	24	30	22
Canberra Deakin	14	4	4	1	5	17	19	21
Queanbeyan City	13	3	2	0	8	30	42	13
Canberra City	14	2	1	0	11	18	37	8
University of Canberra	14	0	3	0	11	12	52	6

Golden Boot (after Round 13)

Marko Perinovic	Belconnen United	11
Peter Buljan	Capital City Suns	9
Matt Valeri	Gungahlin Juventus	9
Steve Lazzari	Weston Creek Royals	9
Scott Manson	Belconnen United	8

Under 23: Gungahlin Juventus 3 Belconnen United 2, Queanbeyan City 3 Canberra City 4, Weston Creek Royals 6 University of Canberra 2, Capital City Suns 3 Monaro 2.

Points: Gungahlin Juventus 36, University of Canberra 27, Belconnen United 25, Canberra Deakin 25, Weston Creek Royals 23, Canberra City 22, Capital City Suns 22, Queanbeyan City 11, Monaro 9, Canberra Olympic 3.

Youth: Canberra City 1 Belconnen United 4, Canberra Deakin 3 Radford 2, Weston Creek Royals 3 Queanbeyan City 0 (forfeit), Gungahlin Juventus 1 Belconnen Strikers 2, Goulburn City 5 St Edmunds 0.

Points: Belconnen United 28, Canberra Deakin 31, Weston Creek Royals 29, University of Canberra 27, Tuggeranong United 26, Gungahlin Juventus 22, St Edmunds 20, Goulburn City 20, Belconnen Strikers 18, Capital City Suns 17, Radford 17, Canberra City 13, Canberra Olympic 5, Queanbeyan City 2.

Division 2

Defence Academy	3	Canberra Defence	2
ANU	2	Burns Club	0
White Eagles	3	Cooma	1
Tuggeranong United	1	O'Connor Knights	3

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
ANU	16	12	2	0	2	42	20	40
Burns Club	17	12	1	0	4	53	24	38
White Eagles	17	10	2	0	5	41	22	34
Cooma	15	6	3	0	6	35	22	24
O'Connor Knights	13	7	0	0	6	17	23	21
Tuggeranong United	15	6	1	0	8	29	36	20
Defence Academy	16	4	0	0	11	22	43	12
Canberra Defence	15	0	1	0	14	10	59	2

Under 23: Defence Academy 0 Canberra Defence 2, ANU 3 Burns Club 1, White Eagles 2 Cooma 1, Tuggeranong United 3 O'Connor Knights 6.

Points: ANU 46, White Eagles 35, Burns Club 28, Defence Academy 26, O'Connor Knights 22, Tuggeranong United 17, Canberra Defence 16, Cooma 8.

Victorian Soccer

VELLA STARS IN THRILLER

GREEN GULLY 1
PORT MELBOURNE 1
(Green Gully won 5-4 on penalties aet)

By John Rigas

Green Gully Cavaliers continued on their winning way this time disposing of Port Melbourne Sharks in the Elimination final on penalties 5-4 after score was deadlocked at 1-1.

The result though, remains in doubt after Port Melbourne lodged an official complaint with the Victorian Soccer Federation after Green Gully had left striker Daniel Genovesi off their official team -sheet.

Port president Phil Diamataris was quick to take action after the match.

He said that there had already been a precedent set when Australia's Olympic side lost a qualifier three years ago when they had used a player that wasn't named on the team-sheet and they had the results overturned.

Diamataris challenged the VSF to make a swift decision rather than go through the tribunal.

"It's a difficult decision, but it's time for them to show some muscle," Diamataris said.

The Sharks president also said that court action was not out of the question if the decision didn't go for his club.

"If Port Melbourne is not playing next Sunday then neither will Bulleen or Green Gully.

"If it's still against us by the end of the week, we'll take it to the Supreme Court," concluded a defiant Diamataris.

Gully's hero was goalkeeper Chris Vella who saved two spotkicks in a row to deny Port Melbourne entry into the minor semi final.

It was a physical encounter right from the outset and it came as no surprise when referee Senko Rastocic handed out seven yellow cards: four going to Green Gully (Zlatko Donev, John Didulica, Robert Markovac and Ante Kovacevic).

The four players have to be on their best behaviour because another yellow card will see them miss one match in the finals series.

Strong windy conditions played a major part in procedings not allowing both sides to create fluent play.

Green Gully's John Didulica had the first scoring opportunity from a distance but his shot flew wide after 15 minutes.

The Cavaliers continued to dominate the opening half with Didulica and Nick Papadopoulos coming close in the 34th and 38th minutes respectavley.

Port Melbourne hardly troubled Gully's defence in the first stanza, the Sharks created their first clear cut scoring chance in after 48 minutes when a long range effort by Nick Tsaltas bounced off the woodwork.

One minute later Gully found themselves in lead after Robert Markovac lashed out with thunderous strike from 25 meters which beat Sharks' goalkeeper Sam Frangos.

Gully kept on creating chances with striker Daniel Genovesi coming close after his shot powered into the side netting in the 56th minute.

Substitute Tony Neceski also came close when his attempted lob went wide.

With all the missed chances not going Gully's way, Port captain Bill Tsiakos made them pay after volleying in an Andy Vargas corner at the far post after 68 minutes.

Port Melbourne coach Andy Bozikas introduced livewire Peter Tsolakis into the game after 55 minutes.

The little tyro caused havoc with his long range specials in the 74th and 90th minutes.

Six minutes into stoppage time Kovacevic struck the crossbar from close range letting the Sharks off the hook again.

In the 94th minute goalkeeper Vella made a spectacular save to deny Tsolakis a goal.

The contest went right down to the wire Port's Jim Latinopoulos scoring the first penalty and Gully's John Dimitrelos missing his teams first spotkick.

After five spotkicks each the drama unfolded into a sudden death shootout with Port's Evis Heath missing his opportunity. Former Sharks player Nick Papadopoulos scored the winner to send the Gully faithful into a frenzy.

After the game Green Gully coach Andrew Marth made special mention of Vella's contribution in the penalty shootout, saying he produced two vital saves.

Marth ended by saying it was a great team effort.

Cavaliers: Vella, Dimitrelos, Cuzzupe (Spiteri 52), Kovacevic, Markovac, Papadopoulos, Douglas (Brown 76), Didulica, Mangos, Donev (Neceski 43)

Sharks: Frangos, R.Vargas, Sonsini, Heath, Latinopoulos, Tsaltas, Knezevic, Tsiakos, A.Vargas (Palatsides 117), Giaccherini (Tsolakis 55)

Scorers: Green Gully - Markovac (49)
Port Melbourne - Tsiakos (68)

Referee: Senko Rastocic

Crowd: 2,500 approx.

SASH STRIKES AGAIN

ALTONA 2
BULLEEN 2
(Altona win 5-3 on penalties aet)

By Dwyght Tuffnell

Altona Magic moved closer to a fourth successive Grand Final appearance after defeating Bulleen Inter Kings 5-3 on penalties in the qualifying final on Sunday.

The Kings had pegged back a 0-2 deficit and even had the chances to win it in the end.

Altona competently dispatched all their penalties whilst Eric Hollingsworth had his kick saved by Darren McGrath.

In a tight first half, the Magic took the lead in the 10th minute.

Bulleen's defence, the tightest in the league, let through probably the softest goal they've conceded this season.

Sava Rusmir's harmless cross was missed by Michael Mazzini but not Sash Becvinovski who calmly slotted the ball under the body of Sean Keogh.

Keogh then saved brilliantly from Zoran Petrevski in the 22nd minute, showing amazing reflexes to stop the ball after Petrevski had deflected a Becvinovski shot.

There was nothing Keogh could do in the 49th minute however as the Bulleen defence cracked again to let through Becvinovski whose rolled cross was slammed into the net by Petrevski.

Finally, Bulleen came to life.

Danny Gnjidic hit a post in the 52nd minute and four minutes later, Hollingsworth had a goal ruled offside in what looked to be a tight call.

They scored their first in the 71st minute, Anthony Grbac smashing a loose ball home from the edge of the area.

Then, with nine minutes to go, Bulleen got what their enormous amount pressure deserved.

Gnjidic headed a cross against the bar but Hollingsworth was there to bundle the ball over the line after it had looped up off the woodwork.

Keogh was called into action in the 88th minute, making another great save, this time from Nick Georgopoulos, as he guided his close range shot around the post.

Hollingsworth had the chance to win it in normal time, but shot wide after he had done well to beat two Magic defenders.

Extra time provided little action, but Gnjidic did have a header that went just wide in the 118th minute.

Becvinovski, John Sapazovski, Tom Markovski, Georgopoulos and Henry Velkovski all converted their spot kicks for Altona.

John Waddell, Grbac and Zdravko Atanasovski scored for Bulleen but McGrath stopped Hollongsworth's effort.

The Magic now play Minor Premiers St Albans Saints in this week's Major Semi Final, but Bulleen are unsure of who they take on in the Minor Semi Final (see other match report).

"It's no the best way in the world to win, but I'll take it," said Altona coach Ian Dobson.

"I thought we played well for 70 minutes, went 2-0 up and decided to sit back and then paid the consequences.

"It was a little bit disappointing the way we defended in the last 20 minutes."

Dobson looks forward to this week's encounter with the Saints.

"Finals football is different, we're working towards the Grand Final," ended Dobson.

Bulleen coach Gary Cole said that he was disappointed with the first half display from his side but was much happier with the second period.

"We scored the two goals and then had chances with ten minutes to go."

Cole, unsure of who his side will be facing next week, said that it won't change their preparation during this week but said: "If the VSF stick to the letter of the law, we'll be playing Port Melbourne on Sunday."

Magic: McGrath, Vasilevski, Tasevski, Runje, Micevski, Markovski, Rusmir (Sapazovski 87), Becvinovski, Velkovski, Petrevski (Georgopoulos 73), Fak.

Kings: Keogh, Valentic (Collina 68), Stojcevski, Della Rocca (Thomas 110), Mazzini, Atanasovski, Waddell, Gnjidic, Sherifovski (Tartaglia 78), Grbac, Hollingsworth.

Scorers: Altona - Becvinovski (10), Petrevski (49)
Bulleen - Grbac (71), Hollingsworth (81)

Referee: Jim Ouliaris

Crowd: 2,500 approx.

CRAZY JOHN'S MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIV 1 ROUND 20 RESULTS

Lalor United	2	North Geelong Warriors	2
Altona East	0	Westvale	3
Doncaster Rovers	3	Westgate	1
Richmond	1	Werribee City	1
Western Suburbs	2	Kingston City	1
Melton Reds	2	Springvale City	2
Ringwood City	0	Northcote City	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Westvale	20	18	1	1	74	12	55
Altona East	20	14	3	3	58	22	45
Western Suburbs	20	14	1	5	52	24	43
Kingston City	20	12	2	6	42	18	35
Werribee City	20	9	4	7	40	31	31
Nth Geelong Warriors	20	8	5	7	36	29	29
Richmond	20	8	4	8	34	33	28
Northcote City	20	8	3	9	36	50	27
Doncaster Rovers	20	8	2	10	39	39	26
Springvale City	20	6	5	9	35	42	23
Westgate	19	4	7	8	35	36	19
Lalor United	20	3	5	12	31	51	14
Ringwood City	19	4	2	13	24	49	14
Melton Reds	20	0	2	18	14	114	-1

ROUND 21 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Springvale City v Ringwood City
Melton Reds v Western Suburbs
Northcote City v North Geelong Warriors
Kingston City v Richmond
Werribee City v Doncaster Rovers
Westgate v Altona East
Westvale v Lalor United

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIV 2 ROUND 20 RESULTS

Broadmeadows City	2	Altona City	2
Regent Bulla	0	Cranbourne	2
Oakleigh	8	East Richmond	1
Maroondah Arrows	0	Essendon Bruns. Royals	1
Knox City	1	Old Scotch Waverley	1
Melbourne City	3	Yarraville/Glen Eira	1
Frankston Strikers	1	Mooroolbark	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oakleigh	20	16	2	2	65	17	50
Melbourne City	20	13	5	2	40	17	44
Yarraville/Glen Eira	20	11	3	6	34	23	36
Old Scotch Waverley	20	10	2	8	39	31	32
Frankston Strikers	20	9	2	9	43	30	29
Cranbourne	20	9	2	9	35	38	29
East Richmond	20	7	7	6	17	21	28
Knox City	20	7	5	8	34	27	26
Essendon Bruns. Royals	20	8	2	10	27	37	26
Altona City	20	6	7	7	31	35	25
Maroondah Arrows	20	6	5	9	23	26	23
Regent Bulla	20	7	2	11	28	49	23
Broadmeadows City	20	3	5	12	25	49	14
Mooroolbark	20	2	3	15	15	56	9

ROUND 21 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Frankston Strikers v Melbourne City
Yarraville/Glen Eira v Knox City
Altona City v Mooroolbark
Essendon Bruns. Royals v Old Scotch Waverley
Oakleigh v Maroondah Arrows
East Richmond v Regent Bulla
Cranbourne v Broadmeadows City

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CRAZY JOHN'S MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIV 3 ROUND 20 RESULTS

Keilor Park	1	Fitzroy City	0
North Coburg United	0	South Springvale	2
Keysborough	1	Diamond Valley United	3
Banyule City	5	Bell Park	1
Stonnington City	2	Chelsea	1
South Werribee	3	Pascoe Vale	2
Geelong	1	Frankston Pines	0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Geelong	20	16	3	1	57	16	51
Diamond Valley Utd	20	14	4	2	51	20	46
Stonnington City	20	14	3	3	43	23	45
Frankston Pines	20	11	4	5	54	29	37
South Springvale	20	9	5	6	31	24	32
Keilor Park	20	8	3	9	33	31	27
North Coburg Utd	20	6	5	9	25	29	23
Pascoe Vale	20	7	2	11	31	43	23
Banyule City	19	5	4	10	29	33	19
Chelsea	20	6	1	13	28	55	19
Bell Park	20	6	3	11	29	42	18
South Werribee	20	6	2	12	31	63	17
Fitzroy City	19	4	4	11	20	31	16
Keysborough	20	4	3	13	27	50	15

ROUND 21 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Frankston Pines v South Werribee
Pascoe Vale v Stonnington City
Fitzroy City v Geelong
Chelsea v Banyule City
Bell Park v Keysborough
Diamond Valley United v North Coburg United
South Springvale v Keilor Park

CRAZY JOHN'S MOBILEWORLD COMMUNICATIONS

CRAZY JOHN'S STATE LEAGUE DIV 4 ROUND 20 RESULTS

Langwarrin	0	Seaford United	0
Melton	1	Sandringham City	2
Nunawading City	0	South Wantirna	5
Western Eagles	2	Geelong Rangers	0
Moreland City	3	Williamstown	1
Clifton Hill United	1	Sunbury United	4
Corio	2	South Caulfield	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Moreland City	20	16	2	2	63	25	50
South Wantirna	20	13	4	3	51	17	43
Seaford United	20	12	5	3	48	26	41
Langwarrin	20	12	4	4	49	28	40
Williamstown	20	12	3	5	36	22	39
Sandringham City	20	9	5	6	51	37	32
Corio	20	8	5	7	37	30	29
Sunbury United	20	8	5	7	34	27	29
Geelong Rangers	19	9	1	9	29	33	28
Western Eagles	20	5	7	8	31	37	22
Melton	20	5	2	13	38	53	17
Clifton Hill United	19	4	1	14	22	63	13
Nunawading City	20	3	1	16	23	62	10
South Caulfield	20	0	1	19	15	67	1

ROUND 21 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

South Caulfield v Clifton Hill United
Sunbury United v Moreland City
Seaford United v Corio
Williamstown v Western Eagles
Geelong Rangers v Nunawading City
South Wantirna v Melton
Sandringham City v Langwarrin

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 1 ROUND 20 RESULTS

Endeavour United	3	Mitcham United	0
Riversdale	1	Lyndale United	3
Templestowe Eagles	7	Brandon Park	0
Springvale Condors	0	Monbulk	1
Lalor	1	North Sunshine Eagles	3

Glenroy - bye
Croxton Park - bye

TABLE - Croxton Park 35, Lyndale United 34, Lalor 29, Endeavour United 28, North Sunshine Eagles 24, Monbulk 23, Templestowe Eagles 22, Riversdale 21, Springvale Condors 20, Mitcham United 17, Glenroy 13, Brandon Park 5.

ROUND 21 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Croxton Park v Lalor
North Sunshine Eagles v Springvale Condors
Monbulk v Templestowe Eagles
Brandon Park v Riversdale
Lyndale United v Endeavour United
Mitcham United v Glenroy

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 2 STH/EAST ROUND 16 RESULTS

Newborough/Yallourn	1	Noble Park	1
Waverley Wanderers	6	Old Camberwell Gram.	0
Doveton	3	Ashburton	1
Braeside United	PP	Monash University	PP
Morwell Pegasus	5	Dandenong	1
Dingley City	3	Berwick City	0

TABLE - Morwell Pegasus 38, Waverley Wanderers 34, Dandenong 34, Doveton 30, Newborough/Yallourn 26, Dingley City 22, Noble Park 20, Monash University 19, Braeside United 14, Ashburton 11, Berwick City 5, Old Camberwell Gram. 4.

ROUND 17 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Morwell Pegasus v Dingley City
Dandenong v Braeside United
Berwick City v Newborough/Yallourn
Monash University v Ashburton
Waverley Wanderers v Doveton
Old Camberwell Gram. v Noble Park

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 2 NTH/WEST/CENTRAL ROUND 16 RESULTS

Brunswick City	4	South Yarra	0
Broadmeadows United	4	Sydenham Park	4
Hoppers Crossing	2	Ballarat	1
Elwood City	3	La Trobe University	1
Keon Park	4	Meadow Park	1
Melbourne University	2	Uni. of Melbourne	1

TABLE - Sydenham Park 37, Brunswick City 35, Broadmeadows United 26, South Yarra 23, Melbourne University 22, Elwood City 22, Keon Park 21, Hoppers Crossing 21, Ballarat 20, Uni. of Melbourne 19, La Trobe University 10, Meadow Park 8.

ROUND 17 FIXTURES
Saturday August 8

Melbourne University v Keon Park
Meadow Park v Elwood City
South Yarra v Uni. of Melbourne
Ballarat v La Trobe University
Hoppers Crossing v Broadmeadows United
Sydenham Park v Brunswick City

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 3 STH/EAST/CENTRAL ROUND 16 RESULTS

Caulfield United	0	Dandenong Inter	3
Collingwood City	2	Endeavour Hills	1
North Caulfield	3	Parkmore	0
Noble Park United	2	Heatherton United	2
Ivanhoe United	1	Clayton	1
Thornbury United	1	Flemington Falcons	2

TABLE - Dandenong Inter 38, Clayton 34, Heatherton United 34, Noble Park United 32, Caulfield United 26, Endeavour United 20, North Caulfield 19, Ivanhoe United 18, Flemington Falcons 18, Collingwood City 15, Thornbury United 10, Parkmore 3.

ROUND 17 FIXTURES
Sunday August 9

Flemington Falcons v Ivanhoe United
Clayton v Noble Park United
Dandenong Inter v Thornbury United
Heatherton United v North Caulfield
Parkmore v Collingwood City
Endeavour Hills v Caulfield United

PROVISIONAL LEAGUE DIV 3 NTH/WEST ROUND 16 RESULTS

Darebin United	3	Watsonia Heights	0
Mill Park	2	North Reservoir	0
Whittlesea United	1	Northern United	0
West Preston	2	Somerton City	4
Keilor United	1	Brimbank	1

North Glenroy - bye

TABLE - Mill Park 32, Somerton City 29, Darebin United 25, North Glenroy 20, North Reservoir 19, Keilor United 17, West Preston 16, Brimbank 16, Watsonia Heights 11, Wittlesea United 11.

ROUND 17 FIXTURES
Sunday August 9

Brimbank v West Preston
Somerton City v Whittlesea United
Watsonia Heights v Keilor United
Northern United v Mill Park
North Glenroy v Darebin United
North Reservoir - bye

Next week in ABSW
MERCOSUR CUP in Global Game

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Elimination Final
Green Gully Cavaliers 1 (Markovac 49) - Port Melbourne Sharks 1 (Tsiakos 68)
(Green Gully win 5-4 on pens. aet)

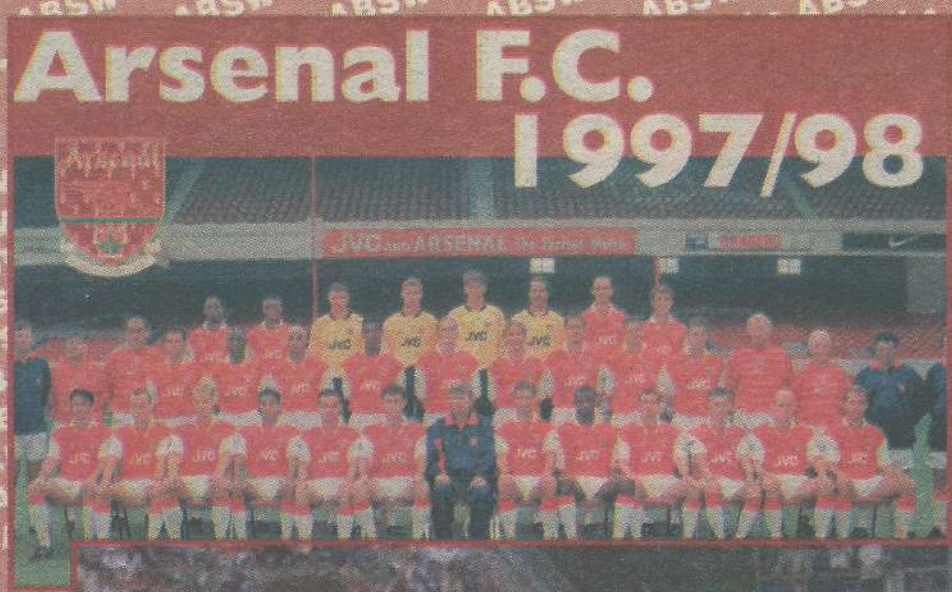
Qualifying Final
Altona Magic 2 (Becvinovski 10, Petrevski 49) - Bulleen Inter Kings 2 (Grbac 71, Hollingsworth 81)
(Altona win 5-3 on pens. aet)

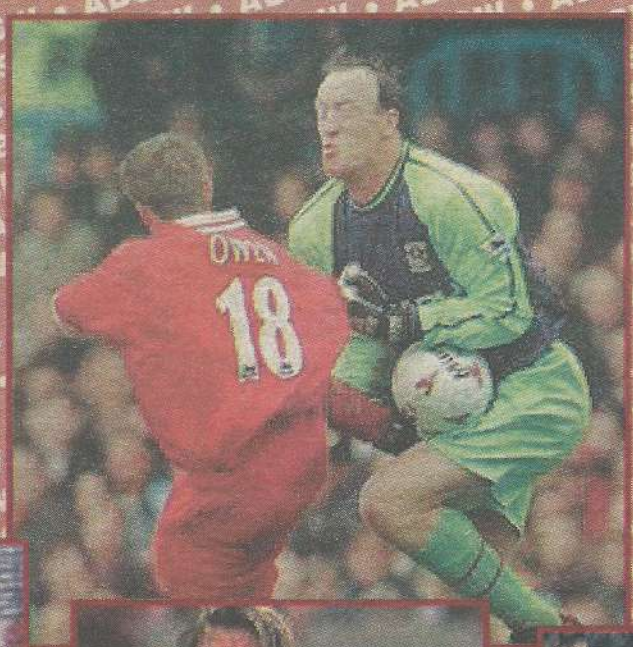
WEEK TWO FIXTURES
Sunday August 9

Minor Semi-Final
Green Gully/Port Melbourne v Bulleen Inter Kings - Knights Stadium - kick off 12.30pm

Major Semi-Final
St Albans Saints v Altona Magic - Knights Stadium - kick off 3.00pm

Well, the contracts are
is here, the guv's sober





English Premier Leag

signed, the star striker ... LET'S ROCK!!!

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Have Your Say ...

BYE OZ HI OSS!

With France 98 concluding and Terry Venables departure, the spotlight will be back on Soccer Australia regarding the next Socceroo coach.

I think for a country like Australia it's important to have a high profile Head Coach. When David Hill appointed Oz Tel, early on I thought it was the wrong decision. Then I changed my mind when I saw the exposure Soccer started getting. All of a sudden people began buying Socceroo jerseys, more was written in the papers, and very importantly most of the overseas stars were turning up for matches against nations such as Solomon Islands and Tahiti.

Look at some of our results:
3-1 win in Hungary
3-0 win in Tunisia
1-0 against Norway
3-1 against Mexico
1-0 against Uruguay
0-0 draw against Brazil

Past Socceroo coaches who lost in World Cup qualifiers to minnows such as Fiji and New Zealand would dream of results such as these.

My ideal replacement for Oz Tel would be Ossie Ardiles, former Argentine World Cup winner and Tottenham manager.

Not because of his name, but he just seems perfect, he has the South American mental toughness combined with the ability to work with English players, where about 75% of our top players are at the moment. With Raul Blanco as his assistant, it all falls into place.

The millions Soccer Australia will be getting every two years just for qualifying for the Confederations Cup should not make money a problem.

Bill Pappas
Bexley, NSW.

WHINGEING BRAZILIANS!

First of all let me thank Australian & British Soccer Weekly for a magnificent job during the World Cup, you kept us well informed all through the 4 weeks.

I truly enjoyed the World Cup, but nothing good lasts forever. What annoyed me are the excuses after the World Cup, I can understand the big occasion got to Ronaldo, though I doubt it, but the rest of the Brazilians reminded me of Branco, another Brazilian in 1990 World Cup in Italy.

He said that he didn't perform as good in the second half because, one of the Argentinian runners gave him a drink and he didn't feel good after that. Argentina won the game 1-0. If that not sour grapes, what is?

For the English who are still crying because of the Beckham send off, the referee went by the rules, France had players sent off, but they still won, Rule Brittania Brittania Rule the Waves, they will not make waves in a swimming pool.

For all those who are still not comvinced of France's win of the World Cup, you did not do your homework. Just have a look where all France's players play their football June, Milan, Inter, Arsenal, Chelsea etc. Which one of them wasn't performing last year?

They were playing in their own backyard. It's once in a lifetime chance.

The players had faith in their coach and he believed in them. They invented the Jules Rimet Trophy.

The record shows Jacquet took the blows but did it his way, and it was time for a new home for the World Cup.

I thank you again and keep up the good work.

J. Muscat
Appin Way, Vic.

OPEN LETTER TO BLATTER

I'd like to congratulate you on your election as FIFA president and wish you the best as you go about your tasks in this new job. I'd like to express the delight that all Australian football fans had in hearing the news of your election.

It is a relief that the policy and ideals that you and your predecessor promoted will continue and we will have a continuation of the development of third world nations, which I feared, might have suffered had Mr Johansson won representation. Furthermore the setting up of an e-mail service allowing the public to contact FIFA is further evidence of the strong relationship the organisation has with the world football public.

Your strong relationship with Australia allows you a good insight into the strengths and difficulties facing the development of football amongst our nations youth. As a 21-year-old Sydney resident, the disappointment of failing to qualify for the World Cup was a bitter moment in a decade which has seen Australian football continue to develop at a remarkable rate.

There are three problems I think Australia need to solve in order to increase football's profile and increase the success of the national league and team. Can you tell me whether FIFA can help us with these problems?

1. The national team needs to play in a strong continental championship such as the Asian Cup, CONMEBOL or Gold Cup. Australia needs some glamorous and challenging matches to fill in the period between World Cups. Could we not be included in one of these championships such as how Mexico was added to the CONMEBOL championship?

2. Australia's club champion needs to play in a challenging club championship such as the Asian Champion Teams' Cup. We seem to be the only country in FIFA who don't have the opportunity to enter such a regional tournament. Developing an Oceanian club championship would be a start but it would not be enough to improve a club system.

3. Australia needs a much simpler World Cup qualification path. I think it would be better if Australia qualified through a group stage rather than needing to win a random two-legged playoff as has happened in the last four world cups. If we have to qualify through Asia, being allowed to play in the final group stages I think would be great.

Preferably though, FIFA's newest confederation, Oceania, should be given the incentive of a direct qualifier. For me it seems unfair that CONMEBOL who has only 10 members were allocated 5 positions in France 98 while Oceania with 11 members wasn't even offered a direct qualifier.

Australian's are very football educated, which was seen by the great atmosphere in our final match against Iran. However we are not allowed enough big games to inspire the youth of our country. If FIFA could help me with some of these queries I would be most grateful. In the meantime I wait with great anticipation for the Sydney Olympic games football tournament and for the next World Cup in 2002.

Stan
Earlwood, NSW.

AFL RUNNING SCARED OF SOCCER

It's interesting to read in the local paper how the AFL chief Wayne Jackson is worried about soccer. He say's that soccer will run over the top of Aussie Rules in the future, unless they strengthen their game in NSW and Qld.

Well I have got news for Wayne Jackson and his colleagues, it won't take 15 year for soccer to take over in NSW and Qld, it will be much sooner, starting from next season.

I have a feeling that support for real football is ready to explode, particularly in NSW, which has the most teams in the NSL. The fact that it is Rugby League territory makes it a lot easier to convert the public than it is in other states.

The big difference in crowd figures between the AFL and the NRL is testament to that.

Therefore the time has come, or drawing near, for soccer to overtake Rugby League very soon, possibly next season at the highest level.

If the provincial or regional cities in NSW, like Newcastle, Wollongong and Canberra all fire this coming season, and can make the top six they will have record crowds for sure.

Add then new team in Sydney, Northern Spirit, who will also draw big crowds if they are competitive, then there is no reason why crowd averages for soccer's NSL won't double to about 10,000 average.

Dominic Scullino,
Nerang, Qld.

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Compiled by **AFRICA** ABSW's Daryl Katz

DOUBLE FOR SUNDOWNS

Mamelodi Sundowns secured the South African league and cup double last Sunday in the replay of the Bob Save Superbowl final at the FNB stadium in Johannesburg.

In a bizarre turn of events, the original match and the replay took place two months apart after World Cup commitments forced a postponement.

Both sides were filled with players having World Cup hard luck stories to tell. Pirates captain Willem Jackson was a major disappointment for South Africa in France, while the highly rated Jerry Sikhosana was restricted to a belated thirty minute appearance as a substitute. Goalkeeper William Okpara was selected for Nigeria, but did not feature.

Daniel Mudau and Page Mahlangu of Sundowns were the last two players omitted from the squad of 24 at the final South African training camp in Germany.

Dogged by controversy all last week, Sundowns entered the match under something of a cloud. Speculation is rife that their key player and Footballer of the Year, Nigerian Raphael Chukwu, is about to leave the club.

Nevertheless, the game was an exciting encounter, with Pirates making the early running. Both teams produced attractive soccer, but proved wasteful in front of goal. The match entered extra time goalless, and with no golden goal rule in operation, the scene was set for another thrilling 30 minutes.

In the 14th minute of extra time, the referee awarded Sundowns a penalty after Gavin Lane tugged back Chukwu in the penalty area. The decision angered the Pirates supporters, who began hurling objects onto the pitch.

However, the chaos did not affect Sundowns captain Mudau, who calmly slotted the ball home to give his side the lead.

Pirates responded by going on the offensive, forcing Sundowns to defend desperately. Consistent pressure was rewarded late on when Michael Manzini, making his debut for Sundowns, was ruled to have handled the ball in the penalty area. Former Nigerian international Sam Pam equalised from the penalty spot to take the game to penalties.

Pirates took an early 4-2 lead in a pulsating shootout, but Sundowns goalkeeper John Tlale saved from teenager Steve Lekoela as he stepped up to take the kick which would have sealed the win. Midfielder Mahlangu finally converted the deciding penalty to give Sundowns a 6-5 victory.

The triumph was the first for Sundowns in this competition, making them only the third club, after Kaizer Chiefs and Cape Town Spurs, to clinch the South African domestic double.

Pirates suffered their second loss in a final in two weekends, losing the opportunity to become the first three time winners of the Bob Save trophy.

Consolation came in the form of a place in the African Cup Winners Cup for 1999 as Sundowns opt for the more prestigious and lucrative African Champions League.

BATTLE FOR SUPREMACY

As the 1998/99 South African Castle Premiership gets underway, Kaizer Chiefs, Orlando Pirates and defending champions Mamelodi Sundowns loom as the most significant challengers.

Sundowns won the title last season by five points from Chiefs, with Pirates taking third position on goal difference ahead of Cape Town Spurs and Manning Rangers. The close season has seen activity in the transfer market as the contenders seek to boost their strength in depth.

Chiefs signed goalkeeper Arthur Bartmann and striker Siyabonga Nomvete from relegated African Wanderers as well as Robert Nauseb from Namibian club Civics. Isaac Kungoane, a superb left footed passer, has returned from a loan period with Cape Town club Santos.

Pirates, trophyless last season, have been equally busy. Midfielder Phumlani Mkhize and striker Sibusiso Zuma have arrived from Wanderers while midfielder Jean-Paul Bang-Penda has come from first division Witbank Aces.

An area of concern for Pirates is their attack, with Jerry Sikhosana recently not productive in front of goal. Chairman Irvin Khoza claims to have secured Zambian national team striker Dennis Lota to strengthen this department.

Sundowns, who clinched last season's double only a matter of days ago, added to an already potent midfield when they beat numerous clubs to the signature of Charles Motlohi, an offensive midfielder from Bloemfontein Celtic.

Sundowns appear to have the edge over their two major rivals in attack, provided they can hold on to their star forward, Raphael Chukwu. Last season he scored four goals on two occasions, won the Footballer of the Year award, and shared the Players' Player of the Year award with teammate Themba Mnguni.

Chiefs have lacked clinical finishers since Pollen Ndlanya and Mark Williams departed, and have been linked with Chukwu to solve the problem that could prove their undoing.

Cape Town Spurs have made no significant signings and while they look capable of a top-eight finish, lack the quality to threaten the "big three" over a 34-match programme.

Manning Rangers coach Gordon Igesund used good organisation to compensate for a lack of high profile stars in winning the inaugural premiership two seasons ago. Rangers are currently involved in the African Champions League, which resumes later this month.

This involvement could impact negatively on their championship aspirations as they face quality opposition in holders Raja Casablanca of Morocco, ASEC of Cote d'Ivoire and Young Africans of Tanzania.

Hellenic and Moroka Swallows have the talent, Wits University and QwaQwa Stars the competitiveness and newly promoted Seven Stars have the administrative vision to ensure they steer clear of the relegation dogfight.

The lower positions are likely to be filled by Amazulu, Celtic, newly promoted Dynamos, Santos, SuperSport United and Vaal Professionals, with Dynamos and Professionals early favourites for relegation.

ZIMBABWE UNDER PRESSURE

The preliminary qualifying competition for the 2000 African Nations Cup is underway, but there is a distinct lack of urgency within the host country regarding the event.

Zimbabwe won the right to host the tournament almost a year ago, but no serious preparation is underway.

The government has yet to respond to the preliminary draft budget presented by the Zimbabwe Football Association, despite previously pledging commitment to the tournament.

More worrying is the fact that some facilities earmarked for the tournament need massive refurbishment if they are to be the venues for such renowned African stars as Sunday Oliseh, Patrick Mboma, Mustapha Hadji, and a host of others who play in excellent conditions overseas.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) has made it clear that they will require four separate world class venues. The country can satisfy this demand with the 60,000 seat National Sports Stadium, the two 45,000 seat stadia (Rufaro and Barbourfields), and the 30,000 seater at Luveve.

The problem is that these stadia are spread over only two cities — Harare and Bulawayo — while CAF insist that the tournament be played in all parts of the country.

A CAF delegation will soon undertake an inspection, and it is unlikely that they will be impressed with what they will see in Masvingo, Mutare, and Gweru.

Zimbabwe Football Association boss, Leo Mugabe, has promised that all venues will be renovated in time for the contest.

History, however, offers Mugabe little comfort. In 1996, despite repeated assurances that they would prepare in time for the 20th edition of the same tournament, Kenya had to withdraw as hosts after failing to mobilise sufficient funds.

It would not be in the best interest of the game for Zimbabwe to put the continental championship at risk by making promises which cannot be fulfilled. Failure could lead to harsh sanctions from CAF, including banishment from further participation in continental competitions.

Tickets will be seen as a way of recouping financial outlay, but with the dwindling power of the Zimbabwean dollar and the rising cost of living, not all will be able to attend.

There is also the case of the Zimbabwean national team. The atmosphere of a tournament is badly affected when the host country is eliminated in the early stages.

No adequate plans have yet been made to prepare the team, and there is disagreement over who should be appointed coach. The team is currently under the guidance of Roy Barretto, but former South African coach Clive Barker has been interviewed for the post.

While everything now rests with Leo Mugabe and his lieutenants, the warning signs are clear. Serious preparations must begin now, or disaster looms for Zimbabwean soccer.

The preliminary qualifying round of the African Nations Cup sees a clash between Algeria and Libya as they battle for the right to enter the main qualifying draw.

Algeria are one of the traditional soccer heavyweights of North Africa.

They won the Nations Cup in 1990, but achieved the finest result in their history at the 1982 World Cup finals in Spain. Inspired by their brilliant African Footballer of the Year, Lakhder Belloumi, and the dangerous Rabah Madjer, they defeated West Germany 2-1 in a group match.

In 1986, Algeria again qualified for the World Cup finals, but more recently they have been overshadowed by the likes of Cameroon, Nigeria, Egypt and Morocco.

At the 1998 Nations Cup, they were eliminated without a point, and must now embark on the road to recovery against Libya in a two-leg tie.

Libya return to the tournament for the first time since 1990, ending an exile prompted by a United Nations ban on air traffic to the North African state.

Sanctions were imposed following the refusal of Libya to hand over two citizens wanted in connection with the 1988 explosion of an American jet over Scotland that claimed 270 lives.

Opponents will travel by land from Tunisia to meet the Libyans, who play on artificial turf. Libya made an impact on this tournament only once, finishing runners-up to Ghana when they staged the 1982 tournament.

In the first leg, played in Tripoli last Friday, Algeria triumphed 2-0, the goals coming from Abdelhafidh Tasfaout in the second half. The return leg takes place in Algeria in two weeks.

AFRICAN ROUND-UP

A team of FIFA inspectors expected in Nigeria to assess preparations for the Under-20 World Youth Championships will be impressed with the facilities, a Nigerian sports official said on Monday.

The secretary of the Nigerian Football Association, Sani Toro, rejected claims that facilities need to be upgraded to meet the standards of the competition. Nigeria has been given provisional approval by FIFA to host the World Youth Championships next year.

In 1995, FIFA cancelled Nigeria's provisional right to host a similar event, blaming an outbreak of meningitis in the eastern town of Abakaliki.

Nigerian Jay-Jay Okocha last week completed his $25 million transfer to Paris St. Germain. The first division championship in France kicks off on August 7.

PSG paid Fenerbahce of Turkey a French record fee for the 24-year-old Okocha, a key figure in Nigeria's 1996 Olympic gold medal team as well as the side that reached the second round of the World Cup finals a month ago.

Neighbours Eritrea and Ethiopia will play their African Nations Cup preliminary round match on neutral ground, the Confederation of African Football said yesterday. Just one game will be played between the two countries, who have been involved in a bloody border dispute since May, to decide who goes through to the group phase of the qualifying competition.

The match will probably take place in Cairo.

Mauritania have joined Gambia in withdrawing from the qualifiers for the 2000 Nations Cup in Zimbabwe. They were due to play Sierra Leone in the preliminary round. Sierra Leone and Senegal are now through to the qualifying groups.

Namibia will take a 2-1 lead into the second leg of their Nations Cup preliminary qualifier against Malawi after securing victory in Windhoek over the weekend. The Namibian technical committee dropped a bombshell when they omitted their most capped player, Ricardo Mannetti.

Apart from being the most experienced player on the Brave Warriors team, Mannetti (23), is one of Namibia's four professional players and has been one of their most consistent performers over the past five years. He began his international career against Zambia in 1994.

Kenya and Uganda both cantered to easy victories in the first leg matches of their Nations Cup preliminary qualifiers over the weekend. Kenya defeated Djibouti 3-0 while Uganda accounted for Rwanda 5-0. Both now seem certain to appear in the group qualifying phase.

Djoliba Athletic Club of Bamako were last week crowned soccer champions of Mali for the third consecutive year.

In the last match of club championship, Djoliba beat Sikasso 3-0. Djoliba will represent Mali in the next African Champions League, while Stade Malien will be their representative in the Cup Winners Cup

Wallidan won the Gambian FA Cup and a place in the African Cup Winners Cup last Sunday, defeating Ports Authority 4-3 on penalties after drawing 1-1 at the end of extra time in a replay of the final. The original final was drawn 1-1 on July 19. League champions Real de Banjul will represent the West African nation in the Champions League.

The agents of South African international striker Shaun Bartlett have stated that he has signed for Swiss club FC Zurich. The 25-year-old, who scored two goals for Bafana Bafana at the World Cup finals in France, tied up the deal with the club's manager Raimundo Ponte in Zurich.

Bartlett joins FC Zurich after a spell on loan at Cape Town Spurs. He was the property of American club Columbus Crew, but returned to South Africa last November to play his way back into the national team ahead of the World Cup finals.

Bartlett has scored nine goals in 28 appearances for South Africa, and is the country's third highest goalscorer behind Phil Masinga and Benedict McCarthy.

Compiled by **ASIA** ABSW's John Vrtaric

DURAKOVIC STARS IN MALAYSIA

Mehmet Durakovic's Selangor team provided the biggest score the mid week round of the M-League. Selangor trounced Negeri Sembilan 4-0 but remain a permanent fixture in the middle of the table eleven points behind the leaders with the season reaching a climax.

Negeri Selangor are only fourth from the bottom but safely clear of the relegation zone.

Scott Ollereshaw and Gus Cerro were both substituted for the second week in a row. With the season all but over Ollerenshaw will be looking forward to a short break before joining the Northern Spirit in its debut in the Ericsson Cup.

Alan Vest's Sarawak team was beaten 1-0 by Sabah and remain similarly placed to Selangor but one point behind.

Brunei had another victory - 2-1 against Perlis and are only four points from the leaders Pahang but, unfortunately, with only one round to be played(last weekend) they are not close enough to challenge for the title.

In the Malaysia Premier Two league Milan Blagojevic and Aytek Genc were both amongst the goals for their respective teams, Johor and Johor FC.

Johor is in second position five points behind leaders Terengganu, who has played one game less and with only two games to play they will rely on the leaders losing all three of their last game to snatch the Premier Two championship.

CHA HITS A BUM NOTE IN CHINA

South Korea's recently sacked coach Cu Bum-Kum did not have the best of starts in his new role as coach of Chinese club Shenzhen. Beijing Guo'an thrashed Shenzhen 5-0 to ruin Cha's Chinese league debut. Paraguay's Casiano Delvalle scored a hat-trick, with other goals coming from Yu Guang and Spaniard Olivas Andres.

The win propelled Beijing into second-place, ahead of Shanghai Shenhua on goal difference. Both teams are five points behind league leaders Dalian Wanda, who crushed Guangzhou Songri 3-0 in Sunday's matches.

Shanghai managed only a 1-1 draw against Shenyang Haishi as the league resumed following a mid-season break. Cha, who was fired after South Korea suffered humiliating losses in their first two matches of the World Cup finals - 3-1 against Mexico and 5-0 against Holland - took over at the newly promoted Shenzhen club on July 17.

Meanwhile, former Portuguese national team coach Carlos Manuel Queiroz has arrived in the United Arab Emirates to take up a two-year contract to run the national soccer team, local newspapers reported. He has had coaching stints at Sporting Lisbon, the New York-New Jersey MetroStars and the Grampus Eight of Japan's J-League.

Due to his stint as coach in New York Queiroz had been considered one of a handful of candidates to coach the United States national team after the sacking of Steve Sampson.

It was always my dream to coach a team here," said the 45-year-old on his arrival in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi.

The UAE failed to reach this month's World Cup in France, losing out to South Korea and Japan in its Asian qualifying group.

The country's only appearance in the finals was in 1990 when they lost all three first-round matches to the former West Germany and Yugoslavia and Colombia.

Queiroz's first task is to prepare a team for the Arab Nations Cup in Qatar in September. The Gulf Cup in Bahrain follows a month later and the Asian Games in Thailand in December.

MATCH-FIXING IN SINGAPORE

Fears have arisen that match fixing has again become an issue in the Asian Football Confederation. Only a few years ago Australia's Abbas Saad was embroiled in a nasty situation in the Malaysia League.

Amongst a number of players involved' Saad was made a culprit and was suspended from all competitions by soccer's ruling body, FIFA. On this occasion it is the Singapore S-League where law enforcement agencies have been brought into action to deal with a number of suspicious circumstances.

Reports emanating from Singapore suggest that a top agency had been asked to investigate possible football match-fixing to ensure bribery does not resurface in the sport here. S-League chief executive officer Chris Chan told Associated Press that he notified the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau in early June about "two or three" suspicious instances earlier this year.

"If I smell a rat, basically I just give (the authorities) a call," Chan said, adding that "sometimes if I feel a player is not playing to form, and the results of the matches are unusual, then something could be amiss."

Singapore has been plagued with a number of match fixing cases in recent years, since the formation of the island republic's domestic soccer league in 1996.

Last September, a bookie convicted of fixing two S-League matches was jailed 18 months and fined 200,000 Singapore dollars (about $A190,000) while the player who colluded with him was jailed for four months and fined 40,000 Singapore dollars ($A37,000).

The Straits Times daily reported that of the 11 S-League clubs, officials from nine clubs contacted believed that some results and players looked suspect this season.

In other news, the S-League season ended last weekend with Warren Spink's Geylang United dropping out of the title race with its 1-0 defeat at the hands of Balestier Central in the penultimate game.

Nevertheless, Geylang United had a very successful season finishing in third spot well clear of the fourth placed team.

Spink had a moderately successful goal scoring season having scored only six goals(with one game to go), well behind the top scorer Goran Paulic of Balestier Central.The title went right down to the wire with the Singapore Armed Forces and Tanjong Pagar United sharing the lead heading into the last round.

Scot O'Donell's team, Marine Castle United finished the season in last position and are headed for the second tier Prime League for next season.

IWATA STILL TOPS IN JAPAN

Brazilian defender Adilson nodded home from a corner to lead front-runner Jubilo Iwata to a 2-0 victory over Urawa Red Diamonds in J-League soccer on Saturday.

The goal came in the 30th minute when Toshiya Fujita produced a pinpoint kick from the right for Adilson. Rookie Naohiro Takahara added another in the 56th collecting a rebound after the Urawa keeper saved a shot.

The defending champions stood with 11 wins against four defeats for 33 points, narrowly keeping the lead by a better goal differential over Shimizu S-Pulse, which defeated Cerezo Osaka 3-1 for the same win-loss record.

Brazilian Alex fired a 22-minute equalizer and Fernando Nicolas Oliva of Argentina struck home the go-ahead shot and an insurance goal in the 59th and 62nd minutes.

Former champions Kashima Antlers and Verdy Kawasaki suffered a loss to go three points down to the top two teams and were tied with Yokohama Marinos and Nagoya Grampus Eight with two games each left in the first stage.

The Antlers crashed to Yokohama Flugels 2-3, while Verdy lost the lead twice to go down to Yokohama Marinos 2-4.

Grampus Eight gained its fourth straignt win for the first time this season beating Bellmare Hiratsuka 5-0. New Dutch striker

Tarik Oulida and Koji Noguchi scored twice while Yugoslav captain Dragan Stojkovic added another.

In other games, Matt Bingley's JEF United Ichihara blanked Kashiwa Reysol 3-0 thanks to Yugoslav midfielder Nenad Maslovar's two goals in the 29th and 65th minutes.

Gamba Osaka stopped its losing streak with a 4-0 victory over Vissel Kobe, while Sanfrecce Hiroshima put an end to sudden death extra-time with Makoto Okubo's 92nd-minute goal to beat Consadole Sapporo 4-3.

Brazilian forward Edmilson scored the sole goal in extra time to give Kyoto Purple Sanga a 1-0 win over regular bottom placer Avispa Fukuoka.

MIDWEEK J-LEAGUE...

Brazilian defender Adilson calmly netted a penalty to score the sole goal as Jubilo Iwata beat Yokohama Marinos 1-0.

Forward Nobuo Kawaguchi was brought down by a Marinos defender in the 73rd minute to give the golden chance to the defending J-League champions.

The Antlers overwhelmed JEF United Ichihara 4-1, with Akira Narahashi scoring twice, Atsushi Yanagisawa and Yoshiyuki Hasegawa once, all in the first half.

Two-time champions Verdy came from behind to beat Gamba Osaka 4-2, with Tsuyoshi Kitazawa hitting a 65th-minute equalizer and Brazilian Euller scoring in the 69th.

Brazilian striker Alessandro dos Santos and Fernando Nicolas Oliva of Argentina were the scorers of S-Pulse's 2-0 victory over Yokohama Flubels, while Grampus Eight powered past struggling Kyoto Purple Sanga 3-1.

The 1994 World Cup top goal scorer Hristo Stoitchkov of Bulgaria made a winning J-League debut with a 20-metre shot in the 16th minute to lead Kashiwa Reysol to a 4-0 victory over Vissel Kobe.

In other games, Urawa Red Diamonds defeated Bellmare Hiratsuka 2-1, Cerezo Osaka ran out 4-3 winners over Consadole Sapporo, and regular bottom placers Avispa Fukuoka gained their second win by beating Sanfrecce Hiroshima 5-3 in a penalty shootout.

And in other news, Naoki Soma of Japan's Kashima Antlers has been declared player of the month for June by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), it said in a statement Tuesday.

Soma, 27, who plays for Japan in the midfield, was in inspired form when Japan appeared in its first ever World Cup finals last month.

"Although teammate Hidetoshi Nakata received most of the media attention, it was Soma who had many observers impressed by the quality of his play," the AFC said in a statement.

WEEKEND J-LEAGUE...

JEF United Ichihara 3 (Maslovar 29, 65-pen, OG 77) **Kashiwa Reysol 0**

Verdy Kawasaki 2 (Euller 4, 57) **Yokohama Marinos 4** (Baldivieso 13-pen, Miura 68, Omura 75, Jo 85)

Yokohama Flugels 3 (Nagai 52, 89, Endo 87) **Kashima Antlers 2** (Yanagisawa 31, Masuda 61)

Bellmare Hiratsuka 0 Nagoya Grampus Eight 5 (Noguchi 25, 48, Stojkovic 44- pen, Oulida 83, 88)

Jubilo Iwata 2 (Adilson 30, Takahara 56) **Urawa Red Diamonds 0**

Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 (Edmilson 103) **Avispa Fukuoka 0**

Cerezo Osaka 1 (Ha Seok-Ju) **Shimizu S-Pulse 3** (Alex 22, Oliva 59, 62)

Vissel Kobe 0 Gamba Osaka 4 (Krupnikovic 60, Kojima 76, Drobnjak 86, Bando 89)

Sanfrecce Hiroshima 4 (Oki 18, 44, Yamaguchi 35, Okubo 92) **Consadole Sapporo 3** (Valdes 23, Yoshiwara 41, 47)

J-LEAGUE STANDINGS

Jubilo Iwata	15	11	4	47	16	33
Shimizu S-Pulse	15	11	4	28	14	33
Yokohama Marinos	15	10	5	36	18	30
Nagoya Grampus Eight	15	11	4	34	19	30
Kashima Antlers	15	10	5	36	23	30
Verdy Kawasaki	15	10	5	33	22	30
Urawa Red Diamonds	15	9	6	24	22	24
Yokohama Flugels	15	9	6	27	25	23
Cerezo Osaka	15	8	7	29	37	23
Bellmare Hiratsuka	15	8	7	25	29	20
Kashiwa Reysol	15	8	7	24	27	19
JEF United Ichihara	15	6	9	27	27	18
Sanfrecce Hiroshima	15	6	9	19	30	16
Gamba Osaka	15	5	10	18	24	12
Consadole Sapporo	15	4	11	25	38	11
Kyoto Purple Sanga	15	4	11	14	30	11
Vissel Kobe	15	3	12	18	41	9
Avispa Fukuoka	15	2	13	20	43	4

Compiled by **USA** ABSW's Aidan Ormond

THE GREATEST FEMALE SOCCER PLAYER ON THE PLANET!

The US are the Brazil (or should that be France?) of the Women's Soccer World. And Mia Hamm is leading the charge, doing a Zinedine Zidane by giving her nation a world title. Mia Hamm confounded her opponents and delighted her fans by scoring both goals as the United States defeated China 2-0 in the Goodwill Games women's final.

A crowd of 11,307 (the largest audience of the Games and similar to Soccer's hold on the Olympics) saw the game in Long Island.

China held the Olympic champions in the first half before succumbing to two flashes of inspiration from the American striker.

In the 66th minute, Hamm ran on to a perceptive pass from Kristine Lilley, shuffled the ball briefly between her feet as Chinese goalkeeper Zhao Yan waited in trepidation before pushing the shot into the net.

Her second goal in the 87th minute was of a different class altogether. Hamm intercepted a wayward Chinese pass, picked her spot and curled a 35 meters shot from right to left, leaving the disconsolate Zhao completely stranded as the ball swerved into the left corner.

"I thought before the game she was the best player in the world and I still feel that way," Zhao said. "She's an exceptional player."

Head U.S. coach Tony DiCicco added: "Both goals she scored were just awesome."

Hamm has become a huge Soccer celebrity in the US. Long after the match finished queues were waiting patiently for her to emerge from the post-game news conferences and sign autographs. Australia's Woman's Soccer guru, Janene Mar, describes her as "the best there is and definitely the world's number one player."

The United States hosts next year's World Cup and Hamm, who scored a hat-trick in the 5-0 semi-final win over Denmark, is now poised to stamp her authority on a larger stage.

Goal number two for the world's greatest woman soccer player Mia Hamm. Last week the US beat China in the Goodwill final in New York. Hamm scored both.

VALDE IN TROUBLE

Miami Fusion midfielder Carlos Valderrama was fined a record US$10,000 by Major League Soccer for refusing to train with his club. The 36-year-old midfielder refused to participate in practice hours after Argentine coach Cacho Cordoba was fired and replaced by Ivo Wortmann. He also failed to show up for the a follow up training session and Wortmann did not take the disgruntled player to Boston for the game against the New England Revolution.

The fine was double the previous largest fine issued by MLS, a $5,000 sanction to Tampa Bay goalkeeper Thomas Ravelli earlier this month.

Ravelli also was suspended six games for kicking a ball which struck referee Ruben Rodhas in the Mutiny's 3-2 loss to New England on July 4.

However it's not all bad news for foreign players in the MLS. Marco Etcheverry became the third D.C. United player in three weeks to earn Major League Soccer Player of the Week honours. The midfielder received the award for Week 20 by creating the only goal in D.C.'s 1-0 win over Los Angeles at the Rose Bowl on July 25. Etcheverry also captured the MLS honour in the first round of the 1998 season.

Meanwhile Andy Williams (not the singer!!), the Columbus Crew and Jamaica national team midfielder has been cleared to begin his Major League Soccer career. Williams arrived in Columbus on July 16, but has not been able to play due to the finalization of paper work between MLS and the Jamaican Federation.

With his clearance the Jamaican played in the match against the Miami Fusion at Lockhart Stadium in Ft. Lauderdale last week.

Williams appeared in one World Cup match for Jamaica in France '98, playing 18 minutes in Jamaica's 3-1 loss to Croatia.

The 20-year-old was a two-time first-team All-American for the Rams and the Atlantic 10 Player of the Year as a junior.

Williams left Rhode Island as the school's all-time leading scorer with 149 points (52 goals and 45 assists).

Bad Boy Bad Boy What We Gonna Do ... Carlos Valderrama

NEW COACH FIRES FUSION

Paul Bravo scored the game-winning goal in the 66th minute for the Colorado Rapids to beat New England 3-1 in the MLS. Marcelo Balboa and Wolde Harris also scored for Colorado.

Meanwhile US national team star Tab Ramos and Giovanni Savarese scored shootout goals and goalkeeper Tony Meola made two important saves late in regulation, and two more in the shootout, as New York-New Jersey beat the Kansas City Wizards 3-2.

Meola sent the game to a shootout by making a kick save on Matt McKeon in the 80th minute and then coming quickly off his line in the 86th minute to force Mark Chung to shoot wide after the Wizards striker had broken through the defence.

Marcelo Herrera nabbed two goals and Brazilian forward Paulinho added two assists as the Miami Fusion beat the Columbus Crew 3-2, its fourth consecutive victory. The victory was the Fusion's second straight under new coach Ivo Wortmann. Jeff Cunningham scored two late goals for Columbus.

Herrera opened the scoring in the eighth minute when he beat Columbus goalkeeper Juergen Sommer from 10 yards. It was Herrera's fifth goal. Columbus opened up the lead to 3-1, in the 64th minute, with Cunningham slipping past Fusion goalkeeper David Winner to score into an open net.

Any chance for a Columbus comeback pretty much ended when Iribarren was red-carded in the 75th minute after picking up his second yellow.

Crew made it interesting when Cunningham took Brian McBride's pass and beat the out-of-position Winner for his fifth goal this season to make it 3-2 with eight minutes to play, but, in the end it was not enough.

Carey Talley scored the deciding shootout goal and D.C. United, which blew a two-goal lead, came back for a 3-2 victory over the Tampa Bay Mutiny.

D.C. United hit two goals from Marco Etcheverry but failed to clinch a playoff spot with two months left in the regular season when Mutiny midfielder Mauricio Ramos tied the game in the 88th minute.

United which outscored the Mutiny 4-3 in the shootout, has won six straight games.

Tampa Bay led the shootout 3-2 when D.C.'s former English professional John Harkes tied the score, and it remained tied when United keeper Scott Garlick stopped Paul Dougherty's attempt.

Tampa Bay's first goal came courtesy of Steve Ralston's power strike in the 62nd minute.

The Mutiny played with a man advantage the entire second half after United defender Jeff Agoos was ejected in the 43rd minute

United's first goal was the resulti of a lovely 'give-and-go' between Etcheverry and Moreno. D.C.'s second goal was set up when Moreno was fouled just outside the penalty area. Etcheverry scored off a 22-yard direct kick that curled just inside the near post. It was Etcheverry's fourth goal off a direct kick this season and the eighth of his United career.

Meanwhile Jason Kreis, Mickey Trotman and Dante Washington scored goals and Mark Dodd recorded his third shutout of the season as the Dallas Burn beat the Los Angeles Galaxy 3-0.

Kreis opened the scoring in the sixth minute and Trotman and Washington both scored in the second half on assists by defender Jorge Rodriguez.

The Galaxy, which is in first place in the Western Conference, has lost three straight games.

9,720 fans sweltered in 100-degree heat to see this exciting encounter as the MLS really starts to heat up.

Compiled by **LATIN** ABSW

LIBERTADORES CUP COMING

Barcelona keeper Jose Cevallos celebrates the Ecuadoreans' semi-final win over Cerro Porteno.

Action from the other semi between River and Vasco. River's Pablo Sorin is right.

ABSW will keep you right up to date with all the latest from the Libertadores Cup Final. The final is a two-leg affair on August 16 and 23 between two fine sides in Latin football.

Barcelona of Ecuador will play Brazil's Vasco da Gama. The Brazilians beat their Argentine rivals River Plate (pictured above right) with former Middlesbrough striker Juninho scoring in the second leg with just seven minutes to go, to give them victory in front of 80,000 at River's stadium.

Barcelona, meanwhile, won in a penalty shootout in Asuncion in Paraguay. The scores in the second leg of the semi was 2-1 (2-2 on aggregate). They eventually won the shootout 4-3.

The first leg of the final will be in Rio and the second will be staged in Guayaquil.

ZAGALLO LEAVES A "PROUD" MAN

Mario Zagallo, the outgoing coach of Brazil's claims he is not bitter about being fired and spoke proudly of his impressive record. "I'm not walking away distraught. I've been with the team for five World Cup finals, with four victories and one runners-up place. I'm very proud," Zagallo told the European press.

Brazilian Football Federation (CBF) president Ricardo Texeira fired Zagallo together with the rest of the national team's management staff, including the great Zico.

Brazilian Football Federation (CBF) president Ricardo Texeira praised Zagallo's staff's efforts at the recent World Cup.

"The management staff's work during the World Cup was excellent. But now we are going to build a new team, that will begin working with their mind set on the 2002 World Cup," Texeira told reporters.

He also praised Zagallo's efforts during the World Cup in France where the Brazilians played some good football at times until suffering a stinging 3-0 defeat to hosts France in the final.

The management staff's work during the World Cup was excellent. But now we are going to build a new team that will begin working with their mind set on the 2002 World Cup," Texeira told reporters.

Zagallo maintained he was proud of his team's performance in the final against France but said a nervous fit suffered by star striker Ronaldo shortly before the match had punctured the rest of the team's confidence.

"If I could change one thing, it would be what happened to Ronaldo. But I stand behind the team doctors, who carried out their jobs very well," Zagallo said.

He said it was clear something had gone awry if one compared Brazil's performance in the games leading up to the final to the team's lacklustre performance against the French.

"If you compare the Holland game to the final, it shows clearly how this affected the team and had them playing differently."

Few however could argue with the credentials of the 66-year-old. As a player in 1958 and 1962 he was part of the Brazilian team that brought home the World Cup.

In 1970 and 1994, when Brazil won their third and fourth World Cups in Mexico and the United States, he was a member of the coaching staff.

"Perhaps I will work for a soccer club, but really I don't know," Zagallo said.

This great man of Soccer surely deserves better.

He's back!!

Meanwhile in other news, the president of the Brazilian national referees' commission, Armando Marques, said the country's men in the middle needed to know more English than just general footballing expressions.

Marques, a respected referee in the 1960s and 1970s, said FIFA would soon ask federations to present only English-speaking referees for major tournaments and warned that those whose linguistic capabilities fell short were unlikely to be selected.

The Brazilians are also bidding for the 2006 World Cup, a bid that has the full support of the national federation. And France 98 Brazilian keeper Taffarel is moving to Turkish side Galatasary.

Finally, and this is no joke. Spanish second division side Badajoz completed the signing of former Argentine international Alejandro Mancuso and said they are chasing Diego Maradona!! (pictured above at USA 94).

Badajoz were acquired this month by Argentinian comedian Marcelo Tinelli, whose spokesman Eduardo Gamarnik confirmed that Maradona is the club's current target.

However, Maradona has been embroiled in another bizarre incident with the wife of former player Claudio Caniggia claiming Maradona was in love with her husband!!

And finally Uruguay's Carlos Aguilera, 34, has been tested positive to cocaine and has been banned for two years. The Penarol player's ban effectively ends his career.

Update on scores and standings for soccer in Latin America (home teams listed first):

BRAZIL
ROUND ONE

Vasco	0	Corinthians	1
Internacional	1	Gremio	0
Portuguesa	2	America MG	1
Guarani	2	Ponte Preta	0
Juventude	3	Parana	0
Atletico PR	2	Coritiba	2
Santos	2	Bragantino	0
Flamengo	1	Botafogo	1
Palmeiras	2	Sao Paulo	1
Atletico MG	1	Cruzeiro	1
Vitoria	1	Goias	2
America RN	0	Sports	4

Standings: Corithians, Internacional, Portuguesa, Guarani, Juventude, Palmeiras, Santos, Goias, Sports 3 puntos; Atletico

PR, Coritiba, Flamengo, Botafogo, Atletico MG, Cruzeiro, 2; Vasco, Gremio, Ponte Preta, Parana, Sao Paulo, Vitoria, Bragantino, America MG, America RN 0.

COLOMBIA
ROUND 23

(Penalty tie-breakers between brackets)

Deportivo Cali	2	Caldas	3
Cortulua	3	Huila	0
Union	2	Nacional	1
Millonarios	0	Junior	0 (4-2)
Unicosta	0	Santa Fe	0 (1-3)
Independiente	3	Bucaramanga	0
Quindio	0	America	0 (3-2)

Standings: Caldas 48; Nacional 47; Junior 42; Cali, Santa Fe, Medellin 40; Huila 36; America 35; Quindio 34; Millonarios 33; Bucaramanga 32; Tolima 29; Cortulua 28; Union 26; Envigado 23; Unicosta 17.

CHILE
ROUND NINE

Coquimbo	0	Wanderers	0
Rangers	0	Universidad de Chile	0
Puerto Montt	1	Palestino	1
Iquique	1	La Serena	0
Concepcion	2	Huachipato	1
Cobreloa	3	Audax Italiano	0
Colo Colo	3	Osorno	3
Temuco	1	Universidad Catolica	1

Standings: Concepcion, Colo Colo; Huachipato, Cobreloa 16; Rangers 15; U. Catolica 14; Puerto Montt 13; Iquique 12; La Serena, U. de Chile 11; Coquimbo 10; Palestino, Temuco 9; A. Italiano 8, Wanderers 6; Osorno 5.

PERU
ROUND TWO

Municipal	1	Aurich	1
Sport Boys	1	Universitario	1
Cristal	0	Pesquero	1
Cienciano	2	Alianza Atletico	0
Minas	2	Alianza Lima	1
Melgar	3	Lawn Tennis	1

Standings: Pesquero 6; Sport Boys, Melgar 4; Alianza Lima, Cristal, Minas, Cienciano, Lawn Tennis 3; Universitario 2; Municipal, Aurich 1; Alianza Atletico 0.

ECUADOR
ROUND 20

Liga de Quito	1	Espoli	1 (5-4)
El Nacional	2	Deportivo Quito	1
Tecnico Universitario	2	Emelec	2 (3-2)
Olmedo	2	Barcelona	1
Panama	2	Cuenca	1
Aucas	1	Delfin	1 (3-2)

Standings: Liga de Quito 42; Emelec 40; Aucas, Olmedo 34; Espoli 33; Barcelona 31; Deportivo Quito, Delfin 29; El Nacional 28; Cuenca 27; Tecnico Universitario 21; Panama 15.

PARAGUAY
ROUND ONE

Cerro Porteno	2	San Lorenzo	1
Olimpia	0	Luqueno	1
Guarani	0	Colegiales	3
Cerro Cora	0	Sol de America	3
Nacional	2	Presidente Hayes	2

Standings: Cerro Porteno, Luqueno, 12 de Octubre, Colegiales, Sol de America 3; Nacional, Hayes 1; San Lorenzo, Olimpia, Cerro Cora, Libertad, Guarani 0.

BOLIVIA
ROUND 18

Santa Cruz	1	Independiente Petrolero	1
The Strongest	6	Blooming	1
Real Potosi	3	Chaco Petrolero	0
Wilsterman	0	San Jose	0
Destroyers	2	Bolivar	1

Standings: Wilsterman 36; The Strongest 34; Blooming, Oriente Petrolero, San Jose 28; Independiente Petrolero 26; Bolivar, Guabira 25; Real Potosi 22; Destroyers 19; Real Santa Cruz 15; Chaco Petrolero 8.

HONDURAS
ROUND 12

Olimpia	1	Universidad	1
Real Maya	2	Independiente	1
Palestino	0	Real Espana	3
Victoria	0	Marathon	2
Universidad	1	Olimpia	1

Standings: Motagua, Olimpia 26; Platense 24; Marathon 21; Real Maya 18; Victoria 17; Real Espana 15; Palestino 13; Vida 12; Universidad e Independiente 7.

Compiled by

GREECE

ABSW's A.D. Akratos

Nice to be back readers. After a short break and talk of offers from rival magazines I once again find myself locked in a small room without a window punching away at a keyboard ruminating on all things Greek. Although we will kick off our weekly look at the Greek scene proper next week I thought you might like a snippet or two to whet your appetite for the season kickoff on August 23.

"twas the summer of the World Cup and without a team in the final, the transfer market was unusually active with some of the biggest names being linked to some of Europe's biggest clubs. Real Madrid, AC Milan, Juventus and even Ajax were linked to various players at different times but in the end it was the signatures of Greece's three premier strikers that made the most noise. The magnificent three are none other that Nikos Machlas (Vitesse Arnhem), Demis Nikolaidis (AEK Athens) and George X. Georgiadis (PAO) and what a trail they blazed in a series of offer and counter offers till the dust finally settled.

Machlas, with perhaps the biggest reputation of all after a fabulous season in which he rivalled for the European Golden Boot, was variously sought by Ajax and Real but in the end opted to stay in Holland, though did change colours for a "bigger" club in PSV Eindhoven.

Foussos (Ionikos)

Georgiadis on the other hand took the plunge and moved abroad. And what a move! Hand chosen by Kenny Dalglish to partner Alan Shearer up front at Newcastle, he will link up with fellow international Vasili Dabizas at Tyneside where the latter enjoyed a fabulous debut season and almost scored in the FA Cup final. With the huge success of Machlas in Holland, Georgiadis will be hoping for s similar debut season in England.

The most controversial transfer saga was that of Nikolaidis (who in Greece is known Brazilian style by a single name "Demi). Linked to several clubs in a season which saw AEK fail to win a trophy, lose their coach and several players to other clubs, Demi kept the soccer world guessing before deciding to stay with the Athenian club who will be playing in the UEFA Cup next year. There were death threats, protest marches and near riots when a false rumour circulated that the club had sold him but finally amidst scenes reminiscent of Paris after the world cup final, the fans partied into the night secure in the knowledge their idol was safely home to stay.

In club news the biggest story to break was the exclusion of AEK from all European competition. Amidst rumours of fears of possible collusion and conflicts of interests between the various ENIC owned clubs (Rangers (Scotland) and Vincenzia (Itay) being the others), UEFA decided to take preventative measures. Good news for the time being with the matter going to court with the interim decision that the matter will be heard at the end of the 1998-99 season thus leaving AEK with European action for this season at least.

With European games looming in the next few weeks the Greek teams to play in preliminary stages are as follows:

Champions' League:
Olympiakos (champions) v Anorthosis (Cyprus) and Steau Bucharest v PAO (runner's up).

UEFA Cup:
Rangers (Scotland) v PAOK and Ferencvaros (Hungary) v AEK.

Looking at the draws it would seem on paper at least that Olympiakos will have an easy time of it against the Cyprean team while PAO has an extremely tricky tie against the Romanian team which will in my opinion be decided on the away goals rule. PAOK were the surprise team last year when they knocked out Arsenal at Highbury in the UEFA Cup and it looks like they will need to repeat the act to get past Rangers, although the Scottish teams abysmal run in Europe would point to a more even encounter than one might expect. AEK on the other hand should be too strong and classy for the Maygars but then with a team as wildly inconsistent as AEK last season, anything can happen.

Anyway, all this and more next week as we get into the our pre-season wrap up in detail but I leave you this week with the league program for the 1998/99 season.

Nikolaidis (AEK)

Noblias (Ofi)

League Program for Season 1998/99

Round 1

Week 1 - 23 August

Panionios - AEK
Ionikos - PAOK
Apollon - Olympiakos
Aris - Ethnikos Asteras
Panelefsiniakos - Xanthi
Kavala - Prodeftiki
Veria - Iraklis
PAO - Peneliakos
OFI - Ethnikos

Week 2 - 30 August

Ionikos - Panionios
AEK - Apollon
PAOK - Aris
Olympiakos - Panelefsiniakos
Ethnikos Asteras - Kavala
Xanthi - Veria
Prodeftiki - PAO
Iraklis - OFI
Peneliakos - Ethnikos

Week 3 - 13 September

Panionios - Apollon
Aris - Ionikos
Panelefsiniakos - AEK
Kavala - PAOK
Veria - Olympiakos
PAO - Ethnikos Asteras
OFI - Xanthi
Ethnikos - Prodeftiki
Paneliakos - Iraklis

Compiled by GREECE

ABSW's A.D. Akratos

Week 4 - 20 September

Aris - Panionios
Apollon - Panelefsiniakos
AEK - Veria
PAOK - PAO
Olympiakos - OFI
Ethnikos Asteras - Ethnikos
Xanthi - Paneliakos
Prodeftiki - Iraklis

Week 5 - 27 September

Panionios - Panelefsiniakos
Kavala - Aris
Veria - Apollon
PAO - Ionikos
OFI - AEK
Ethnikos - PAOK
Peneliakos - Olympiakos
Iraklis - Ethnikos Asteras
Prodeftiki - Xanthi

Week 6 - 6 October

Kavala - Panionios
Panelefsiniakos - Veria
Aris - PAO
Apollon - OFI
Ionikos - Ethnikos
AEK - Paneliakos
PAOK - Iraklis

Alexandris - Olympiakos

Lymberopoulos - PAO

Olympiakos - Prodeftiki
Ethnikos Asteras - Xanthi

Week 7 - 18 October

Panionios - Veria
PAO - Kavala
OFI - Panelefsiniakos
Ethnikos - Aris
Paneliakos - Apollon
Iraklis - Ionikos
Prodeftiki - AEK
Xanthi - PAOK
Ethnikos Asteras - Olympiakos

Week 8 - 25 October

PAO - Panionios
Veria - OFI
Kavala - Ethnikos
Panelefsiniakos - Paneliakos
Aris - Iraklis
Apollon - Prodeftiki
Ionikos - Xanthi
AEK - Ethnikos - Asteras
PAOK - Olympiakos

Week 9 - 1 November

Panionios - OFI
Ethnikos - PAO
Peneliakos - Veria
Iraklis - Kavala
Prodeftiki - Panelefsiniakos
Xanthi - Aris
Ethnikos Asteras - Apollon
Olympiakos - Ionikos
PAOK - AEK

Week 10 - 8 November

Ethnikos - Panionios
OFI - Paneliakos
PAO - Iraklis
Veria - Prodeftiki
Kavala - Xanthi
Panelefsiniakos - Ethnikos Asteras
Aris - Olympiakos
Apollon - PAOK
AEK - Ionikos

Week 11 - 15 November

Panionios - Paneliakos
Iraklis - Ethnikos
Prodeftiki - OFI
Xanthi - PAO
Ethnikos Asteras - Veria
Olympiakos - Kavala
PAOK - Panelefsiniakos
AEK - Aris
Ionikos - Apollon

Week 12 - 22 November

Iraklis - Panionios
Paneliakos - Prodeftiki
Iraklis - Olympiakos
Paneliakos - PAOK
Ethnikos - AEK
OFI - Ionikos
PAO - Apollon
Veria - Aris
Panelefsiniakos - Kavala

Week 15 - 13 December

Panionios - Ethnikos Asteras
Olympiakos - Xanthi
PAOK - Prodeftiki
AEK - Iraklis
Ionikos - Paneliakos
Apollon - Ethnikos
Aris - OFI
Panelefsiniakos - PAO
Kavala - Veria

Week 16 - 20 December

Olympiakos - Panionios
Ethnikos Asteras - PAOK
Xanthi - AEK
Prodeftiki - Ionikos
Iraklis - Apollon

Donis (AEK)

Ethnikos - Xanthi
OFI - Ethnikos Asteras
PAO - Olympiakos
Veria - PAOK
Kavala - AEK
Panelefsiniakos - Ionikos
Apollon Aris

Week 13 - 29 November

Panionios - Prodeftiki
Xanthi - Iraklis
Ethnikos Asteras - Paneliakos
Olympiakos - Ethnikos
PAOK - OFI
AEK - PAO
Ionikos - Veria
Apollon - Kavala
Aris - Panelefsiniakos

Week 14 - 6 December

Xanthi - Panionios
Prodeftiki - Ethnikos Asteras
Paneliakos - Aris
Ethnikos - Panelefsiniakos
OFI - Kavala
Veria - PAO

Week 17 - 3 January

Panionios - PAOK
AEK - Olympiakos
Ionikos - Ethnikos Asteras
Apollon - Xanthi
Aris - Prodeftiki
Panelefsiniakos - Iraklis
Kavala - Paneliakos
Veria - Ethnikos
PAO - OFI

The return legs (Round 2) will be played on the following dates:
10/1, 17/1, 24/1, 31/1, 7/2, 14/2, 21/2, 28/2, 7/3, 14/3, 21/3, 4/4, 18/4, 25/4, 2/5, 9/5 and 16/5

Compiled by ABSW's Joe Russo

ITALY

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JUVE'S TITLE DEFENCE

The Italian Soccer season is under a month from kicking off with the Serie B starting on September 6, and the Serie A under way the following week.

Italian champion Juventus will open its title defense against newly-promoted sides Perugia and Cagliari before meeting Parma on the third weekend of the new soccer season.

The league calendar published late last week gave Juventus an away match at Perugia on September 13 when the Serie A kicks off.

They then face Cagliari in Turin before traveling to Parma for one of their toughest games of the campaign. Parma, which finished fifth last year, has invested around 100 billion lire ($57 million) in its squad since May and has been tipped as a potential champion.

"It's an important start, it's a bit of a surprise to find a fixture like Parma-Juve on the third weekend of the season," Juventus coach Marcello Lippi said.

Inter, which pushed Juventus all the way last season, starts its title assault at Cagliari. They meet Juventus on the sixth weekend in what is sure to be one of the most heated encounters of the championship.

Last season's title decider between the two sides in Turin triggered uproar when the referee denied Inter's Brazilian star Ronaldo what appeared to be a penalty. Juventus won the match 1-0 to dash the Milan side's championship hopes.

The match prompted accusations that Italy's referees were biased toward Juventus, owned by the powerful Agnelli family. Juve ends the league season against newly-promoted Venezia while Inter finish off agaist Bologna.

It should be a most intriguining season with early season predictions most likely going out the window. Serie A, 1998/99 version, should at least be as good, if not better than any past season to date.

ROUND 1 FIXTURES

September 13

Bari-Venezia
Cagliari-Inter
Fiorentina-Empoli
Milan-Bologna
Parma-Vicenza
Perugia-Juventus
Piacenza-Lazio
Roma-Salernitana
Udinese-Sampdoria

FERGUSON BAGS AC MILAN

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson is set to break off from United's Scandinavian tour in a bid to persuade Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert to join the English Premiership giants.

Ferguson is preparing to fly to Italy to meet up with the player after he returns from holiday to AC Milan at Milanello, the team's Italian headquarters.

United and Milan have agreed to a nine million pound ($15 million) move but Ferguson has yet to sort out personal terms with the striker, whose current wage demands would shatter United's strict salary structure.

Ferguson said: "We are trying to do a deal when the boy (Kluivert) comes back from holiday. He is meeting Milan and thereafter we hope to be in touch with him and try to progress it from there.'

"If you look at the history of players going to Milan from Holland it has not worked. He is a young player of 22, so I think all his best years will be ahead of him."

This last comment from Ferguson is fairly incomprehensible. Sure Kluivert was not a success at AC Milan, but to generalise like that about all Dutch players at the famous club is way off the mark.

Someone ought to remind him of some names of the not too distant past in the famous red and black shirts, names such as Marco van Basten, Frank Rijkaard and of course, Ruud Gullit !

MILAN 1899

CASIRAGHI READY FOR ENGLAND

AS Roma coach Zdenek Zeman was summoned to appear before an Italian anti-doping committee after allegedly suggesting soccer had sold its soul to drugs and big business.

The Italian Olympic Committee (CONI), which oversees sport in Italy, said it had opened an investigation into Zeman's reported comments and had summoned the Czech trainer to a hearing to clear up the case.

Zeman was widely quoted as saying that soccer was changing for the worse. "It needs to escape from the pharmacies and the financial offices and get back to being sport and entertainment," he said. "It isn't (entertainment) anymore."

In the wake of IOC Chief Juan Antonio Samaranch's recent comments on the same subject, CONI will need to act very quick on this one. Zeman, highly experienced that he is, should have known better.

Italian striker Pierluigi Casiraghi is raring to go as he awaits his Premiership debut for Chelsea following his move from Lazio.

Casiraghi, two-time UEFA Cup winner and in the Italian squad which reached the 1994 World Cup final, revealed that one of his early heroes was former England and AC Milan star Mark Hateley.

And the 29-year-old Italian says he has his heart set on showing that he too can flourish as an old-fashioned 'English-style' centre forward at Stamford Bridge.

"After just two weeks in England, one thing that I really like is that the referees don't whistle very often," said Casiraghi, who joined the Blues for 5.4 million pounds to underpin Chelsea's Italian connection under Gianluca Vialli.

"Whatever happened at the World Cup, the mentality of the English way won't change. "Yes I did admire Mark Hateley. I was a Milan fan and he was a strong centre forward — a bit like I am." Casiraghi said.

The other English star who Casiraghi admires greatly is a somewhat different player — his former Lazio teammate Paul Gascoigne.

The Italian striker was shocked to learn that Gascoigne, like himself, had been left out of his country's World Cup squad after playing a major role in almost all of the qualifying games leading up to the finals.

Casiraghi's own hopes of resurrecting his international career were given a huge boost with the recent appointment of Dino Zoff— his former boss at Juventus and coach and president at Lazio — as Italy's manager after replacing Cesare Maldini..

Although Casiraghi admits his English is not as good as it might be, that will not be a big problem at Chelsea as he links up with former international room-mate Gianfranco Zola, ex-Lazio teammate Roberto Di Matteo and former Juventus colleague, now Blues manager, Vialli.

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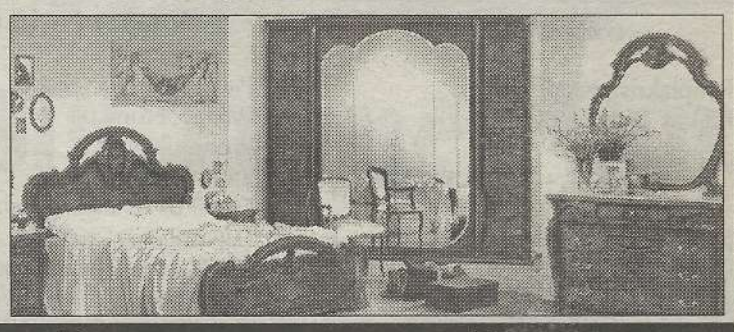

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Compiled by **EUROPE** ABSW's Mark Fowler

SHORT PASSES

By Lord Cobblers

In the UEFA Cup first qualifying round Celtics city rivals Rangers saw off another Irish side, Shelbourne, 2-0 at Ibrox to advance 7-3 on aggregate.

Celtic brushed aside St. Patricks Athletic of Ireland to advance to the second qualifying round of the European Cup. Goals from Harald Brattbakk and Henrik Larsson gave the Scottish side a 2-0 victory in Ireland following the goalless first leg in Glasgow.

Slovak side Kosice hammered Northern Ireland's Cliftonville 8-0 for a 13-1 aggregate win, while FC Bruges of Belgium laboured to a 2-1 home victory over Macedonias Sileks after a goalless first leg.

Finland's Jonatan Johansson scored his first two goals for Rangers after four hours and 89 minutes to give the Scots their 2-0 home win over Shelbourne. In the first leg, played at Tranmere in England for security reasons, Shelbourne had led 3-0 before eventually losing 5-3.

FC Zurich of Switzerland has signed South African forward Shaun Bartlett, who has been playing in Major League Soccer in the US. Bartlett, who scored two goals against Saudi Arabia in France, scored 11 goals in 49 appearances in the States.

Dutch champion Ajax beat German first division side Borussia Monchengladbach 3-1 in a pre-season friendly match on Saturday. Ajax got goals from Georgian Georgi Kinkladze, Dane Ole Tobiasen and Finn Jari Litmanen — all within the first 25 minutes — while Monchengladbach' second-half strike came from Austrian international Toni Polster, a close-season signing from relegated Cologne.

Portuguese giant Benfica beat Newcastle in a pre-season touranament semi on the weekend at Middlesbrough's Riverside stadium. Gary Speed and substitute Ralph Keidel missed spotkicks as Newcastle lost 4-3 in a penalty shootout after the sides drew 0-0 on Saturday afternoon. Newcastle faced a third-place playoff on Sunday against fellow English Premiership side Middlesbrough. Empoli beat the home side 1-0 thanks to Fabio Artico's 81st-minute strike.

Jacques Glassmann, the player whose revelations sparked a corruption enquiry after a Valenciennes-Marseille French League match in 1993, is to join first division club Strasbourg as a coach. Glassmann, who played for Valenciennes and revealed players from the team had been offered bribes by Marseille officials, had been finding it hard to find work in French football. He has spent the last three years with the St. Rose club on the island of Reunion. Claude Le Roy, general manager of Strasbourg, said Glassmann's experience would be of great benefit to the club, who narrowly avoided relegation last season.

Belgian officials on Saturday said matchday sales of tickets for top-flight matches at venues holding more than 10,000 fans were to be stopped on safety grounds this season. The decision by the interior ministry Louis Tobback is designed to cut out the incidence of crowd trouble.

Two goals by Brazilian striker Sonny Anderson helped Spanish champion Barcelona kick off its English tour with a deserved 3-2 victory over first division Wolverhampton at Molineux. Anderson provided the cutting edge to a display that provided rich entertainment for a crowd of more than 18,000.

Spain's Salamanca have signed River Plate striker Martin Cardetti on a year's loan, Argentinian media reported Saturday. Cardetti, 24, had been pressing for a move since falling out with River coach Ramon Diaz and the clubs agreed a $500,000 deal with an option for a permanent move for $5 million.

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

In the midweek Russian games Spartak Moscow beat cross-city rivals Dynamo 2-0 to maintain a four-point lead over Zenit St Petersburg at the top of the Russian premier division.

In the first meeting between the two Moscow clubs since former Spartak coach Georgy Yartsev moved to Dynamo, Spartak put on a fine attacking display after the interval.

Newly-signed Yevgeny Bushmanov opened the scoring in the 55th minute with a powerful volley, beating Dynamo goalkeeper Dmitry Tyapushkin from long range, while Yegor Titov, collecting a nice pass from Andrei Tikhonov, sealed the victory for the Russian champions 12 minutes later.

Meanwhile Zenit won 3-1 at Torpedo Moscow to keep pace with the leaders, trailing Spartak 38 to 34 points respectively after 18 matches.

In another Moscow derby, Lokomotiv edged CSKA 1-0 thanks to a goal by Ukrainian striker Oleg Garas with eight minutes from time to stay in third place.

Unfashionable Zhemchuzhina Sochi stayed fourth with a 1-0 away win over bottom-of-the-league Tyumen, while Rotor Volgograd pounded Chernomorets Novorossiisk 3-0 to stay fifth. See next page for latest Russian results.

In other news, Yugoslavia Olympic coach Milan Zivadinovic has been promoted to boss of the national side. He replaced retiring World Cup coach Slobodan Santrac, the Yugoslav Soccer Federation announced on Saturday. Santrac, who came in for some harsh criticism in Yugoslavia for the team's overly-defensive performance in the World Cup finals, had suggested former Atletico Madrid coach Radomir Antic as his successor. Antic said he wanted to stay in Spanish club soccer.

Zivadinovic, 54, who had two spells as a player with Crvena Zvezda Belgrade (Red Star), has coached several Yugoslav clubs, including Crvena Zvezda, and sides in Turkey, Cyprus and Kuwait. He had been coach of Yugoslav Olympic side since 1995.

Yugoslavia in action at France 98. They now have a new coach.

TURKS MAKING THEIR MARK

Two international goalkeepers have joined the ever-growing band of foreign players in the Turkish league.

Romanian goalkeeper Florin Prunea has left Dynamo Bucharest and signed for newly promoted Erzrumspor, while in a major coup Brazilian hero Taffarel has signed for champions Galatasary.

Prunea has signed a one year deal with Erzrumspor, after the 30 year old announced the Turkish club had met his demands. While not revealing those demands, Prunea did announce that he would be earning, "Four times more in Turkey than in Romania."

Prunea played his last club football for first division side Universitatea Cluj, after being loaned there for six months by Dynamo.

The capture of Taffarel pleased Galatasary, who announced through club spokesman Turgay Vardar, "From now on he's officially part of Galatasary."

However Nigeria's Jay-Jay Okocha has signed a four year deal to play with Paris St. Germain in France. Okocha leaves Turkish side Fenerbahce for a French record transfer fee of $17 million.

The 24 year old won Olympic gold in 1996 with Nigeria, and was also an impressive performer in France during his countries all too short stay in the World Cup.

PSG Managing director Charles Bietry said to be the local media: "To convince Okocha I spoke to him of the club's ambitions, its new generation of players, the quality of the Parisian crowd, that of French football, and in that the World Cup was a help.

"On top of that, I told him it was better for him to play in Paris if he wanted to become a star."

While PSG are heralding the signing of Okocha, Italian striker Marco Simone has clashed with Bietry over a new contract, and although training with PSH could be on his way out.

Simone was voted the first division's player of the season, but seems unlikely to be there for the opening of the French league on August 7.

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Compiled by

EUROPE

ABSW's Mark Fowler

Champions League

Preliminar Round, Second-leg games played on Wednesday:

At Barry
Barry Town (Wal) 1 Dinamo Kiev (Ukr) 2
Dinamo Kiev go through 10-1 on aggregate

At Dublin
St Patrick's Athletic (Ire) 0 Celtic (Sco) 2
Celtic goes through 2-0 on aggregate

At Halmstad
Halmstad BK (Swe) 2 FC Liteks (Bul) 1
FC Liteks go through 3-2 on aggregate

At Brugge
FC Brugge (Bel) 2 Sileks (Mcd) 1
FC Brugge go through 2-1 on aggregate

At Reykjavik
Vestmannaeyia (Isl) 1 Obilic (Yug) 2
Obilic go through 4-1 on aggregate

At Nicosia
Anorthosis (Chy) 6 Valetta (Mlt) 0
Anorthosis go through 8-0 on aggregate

At Esch-sur-Alzette
Jeunesse Esch (Lux) 0 Grasshopper Zurich (Swi) 2
Grasshopper Zurich go through 7-0 on aggregate

At Kosice
FC Kosice (Svk) 8 Cliftonville (NIrl) 0
FC Kosice go through 13-1 on aggregate

At Budapest
Ujpest Budapest (Hun) 3 FC Zimbru (Mol) 1
Ujpest Budapest go through 3-2 on aggregate

At Maribor
NK Maribor (Slo) 1 Kareda (Lit) 0
Maribor go through 4-0 on aggregate

At Gyandzha
FC Kapaz (Aze) 1 LKS Lodz (Pol) 3
LKS Lodz go through 7-2 on aggregate

At Yerevan
FC Erevan (Arm) 0 HJK Helsinki (Fin) 3
HJK Helsinki go through 5-0 on aggregate

At Tirana
KF Vllaznia (Alb) 1 Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) 3
Dinamo Tbilisi go through 4-1

At Minsk
Dynamo Minsk (Blr) 1 Skonto Riga (Lat) 2
Skonto Riga go through 2-1 on aggregate

At Tallinn
FC Flora (Est) 3 Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 1
Steaua go through 5-4 on aggregate

UEFA Cup

Preliminary-round, second-leg matches on Wednesday:

At Malmo
Malmo (Swe) 5 Shirak (Arm) 0
Malmo go through 7-0 on aggregate

At Vaasa
Vaasa (Fin) 4 Torshavn (Far) 0
Vaasa go through 4-2 on aggregate

At Helsinki
Palloilijat (Fin) 1 Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr) 3
Hapoel Tel Aviv go through 6-2 on aggregate

At Valetta
Birkirkara (Mlt) 0 Shakhtior Donetsk (Ukr) 4
Shakhtior Donetsk go through 6-2 on aggregate

At Brussels
Anderlecht (Bel) 5 Tiligul (Mol) 0
Anderlecht go through 6-0 on aggregate

At Skopje
Sloga Jugomagnat 1 Galati (Rom) 1
Galati go through 4-1 on aggregate

At Belgrade
Red Star Belgrade (Yug) 7 FC Kolkheti (Geo) 0
Red Star Belgrade go through 11-0 on aggregate

At Riga:
Daugava (Lat) 1 Mura (Slo) 2
Mura go through 8-2 on aggregate

At Vilnius
Jalguiris (Lit) 1 Akranes (Isl) 0
Jalguiris go through 3-3 on aggregate (away goals rule)

At Cracow
Cracow (Pol) 7 Newtown (Wal) 0
Cracow go through 7-0 on aggregate

At Warsaw
Polonia Warsaw (Pol) 3 Tallinn (Est) 1
Polonia Warsaw go through 5-1 on aggregate

At Tirana
SK Tirana (Alb) 0 Inter Bratislava (Svk) 2
Inter Bratislava go through 4-0 on aggregate

At Baku
Dinamo Baku (Aze) 0 Pitesti (Rom) 2
Pitesti go through 7-1 on aggregate

At Kilmarnock
Kilmarnock (Sco) 1 Zeljeznicar (Bos) 0
Kilmarnock go through 2-1 on aggregate

At Linfield
Linfield (NIre) 5 Omonia Nicosia (Cyp) 3
Omonia Nicosia go through 8-6 on aggregate

At Glasgow
Glasgow Rangers (Sco) 2 Shelbourne (Ire) 0
Glasgow Rangers go through 7-3 on aggregate

Intertoto Cup

Fourth Round First Leg played on Wednesday:
Werder Bremen (Ger) 3, Samsunspor (Tur) 0

UEFA Cup Draw

The second preliminary round matches have been drawn, with the two legs to played on August 11 and 25.

Red Star Belgrade (Yug) v Rotor Volgograd (Rus)
Ferencvaros (Hun) v AEK Athens (Greece)
Molde (Nor) v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
IFK Gothenberg (Swe) v Fenerbahce (Tur)
Rangers (Scot) v PAOK Salonika (Greece)
Hajduk Spilt (Cro) v Malmo (Swe)

POLAND

Widzew Lodz	0	Gornik Zabrze	1
Odra Wodzislaw	2	Ruch Chorzow	2
Zaglebie Lubin	1	GKS Belchatow	2
Lech Poznan	3	GKS Katowice	1
Ruch Radzionkow	1	Amica Wronki	1
Stomil Olsztyn	1	Legia Warsaw	2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Ruch Radzionkow	2	1	1	0	6	1	4
Amica Wronki	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Gornik Zabrze	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Legia Warsaw	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Lech Poznan	2	1	0	1	4	3	3
Wisla Krakow	1	1	0	0	2	1	3
Polonia Warsaw	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
GKS Belchatow	2	1	0	1	2	2	3
GKS Katowice	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
LKS Lodz	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Ruch Chorzow	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Odra Wodzislaw	2	0	1	1	3	4	1
Zaglebie Lubin	2	0	1	1	2	3	1
Stomil Olsztyn	2	0	0	2	1	3	0
Widzew Lodz	2	0	0	2	0	6	0
Pogon Szczecin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

NOTE: Due to scheduling problems, Pogon Szczecin played its first match of the season after the other sides.

AUSTRIA

VfB Admira Modling	0	St Polten	2
DSV Leoben	4	Austria K'furt/VSV	0
SV Spittal	0	SV Worgl	1
SV Stockerau	0	SV Braunau	2
Austria Vienna	2	SW Bregenz	4

BELGIUM

Lokeren, Bel,	5	Nancy, Fra,	0
FC Brugge, Bel,	2	B Dortmund, Ger,	1
(Pre-season friendlies)			

RUSSIA

Dynamo Moscow	0	CSKA Moscow	3
Zenit St Petersburg	0	Rotor Volgograd	1
Alania Vladikavkaz	6	Tyumen	0
Zhemchuzhina Sochi	1	Spartak Moscow	4
Lokomotiv Moscow	2	Torpedo Moscow	0
K Sovietov Samara	1	Rostselmash Rostov	0
Uralan Elista	2	Baltika Kaliningrad	1
Cher Novorossiisk	2	Shinnik Yaroslavl	1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak Moscow	19	12	5	2	36	12	41
Zenit St Petersburg	19	9	7	3	29	14	34
Lokomotiv Moscow	19	9	5	5	21	13	32
Rotor Volgograd	19	8	8	3	36	22	32
Alania Vladikavkaz	19	8	7	4	32	19	31
Zhemchuzhina Sochi	19	8	5	6	21	21	29
Rostselmash Rostov	19	7	7	5	27	24	28
Uralan Elista	19	7	6	6	22	20	27
Shinnik Yaroslavl	19	7	4	8	18	22	25
Krylya Sovietov Samara	19	7	3	9	16	25	24
CSKA Moscow	19	6	5	8	24	20	23
Chernomorets Novorossiisk	19	4	9	6	23	25	21
Torpedo Moscow	19	4	8	7	19	23	20
Baltika Kaliningrad	19	4	7	8	17	28	19
Dynamo Moscow	19	3	9	7	14	21	18
Tyumen	19	1	1	17	7	53	4

NO MORE TEMPTATION!

Romania's 77th league championship kicked off on the weekend, with four stars from Romania's successful 1994 World Cup team returning from overseas leagues.

Sweeper Miodrag Belodedici has signed for Steaua, midfielder Ionut Lupescu and striker Ioan Vladoiu have left Germany to play for Dinamo, and Brescia midfielder Mircea Lucescu will play for Rapid.

"Persuading our best players to come home to raise the level of the local championship can reverse the decline in morals of Romanian soccer," said Rapid Bucharest coach Mircea Lucescu, who returned to Romania last year after seven years coaching in Italy.

The league has been hit by corruption scandals, plus allegations of match rigging (see Asia page for more match-rigging stories) and poor officiating.

This has meant the average first division attendance dropping to 2,000, as most of Romania's top players have moved abroad and have reduced the glamour of hte league.

Steaua have won the past six titles, but experts are predicting a serious challenge from three other Bucharest clubs Dinamo, National and Rapid as well as Universitatea of Craiova.

Two outsiders could be Arges Pitesti and Otelul Galati, who both qualified for the second preliminary round of the UEFA Cup.

Dinamo's signing Lupescu, for one, believes spectators will return to watch the games. "The players who spent years making money in other countries have now outgrown that sort of temptation and unofficial extra bonuses are not important for them. I have returned home to help my former club Dinamo to get back once again in Europe."

TSARTAS MOVES TO SANTANDER

Greek international midfielder Vassilis Tsartas completed a $4.5 million move from Seville to Racing Santander on the weekend.

Tsartas, who joined Seville from AEK Athens two years ago, was considered a flop after his first year in Spanish football.

Striker Salvador Ballesta moves with him to first division Santander as part of the deal.

Israel's national squad left for Austria on the weekend for a week-long training camp ahead of forthcoming European championship qualifiers.

Missing from the party named for the qualifier against Austria in Vienna on September 5 were their four "foreign legion" players — Eyal Berkovic (West Ham), David Amsalem (Crystal Palace), Haim Revivo (Celta Vigo) and Ronnen Harazi (Bursaspor).

They are training with their clubs for their respective new league seasons and could not get away.

FC Brondby says it has bought Brazilian defender Vragel Da Silva for a $450,000 transfer fee from Brazil's Campo Grande Atletico Clube.

It said Da Silva, 24, signed a three-year contract with immediate effect after a one-week trial in Denmark.

Brondby are Danish superleague champions and cup-winners. Da Silva is the first Brazilian to play in Danish superleague soccer.

SPARTAK TOO GOOD

In other news Russian champions Spartak Moscow stretched its lead in the premier division to seven points with a comfortable 4-1 road win over Zhemchuzhina Sochi on Saturday.

Second-placed Zenit St. Petersburg lost valuable ground by losing 1-0 at home to Rotor Volgograd. Ilya Borodin scored the winner from close range in the 85th minute after taking advantage of a defensive blunder.

Spartak scored all of its goals in the second half, two of them coming from captain Ilya Tsymbalar.

German Kutarbas' late consolation strike for Zhemchuzhina was the first goal Spartak's Russian international goalkeeper Alexander Filimonov had conceded in eight league matches.

Spartak has 41 points, Zenit 34 and Lokomotiv Moscow — 2-0 winners over city rivals Torpedo — and Rotor 32.

Alania Vladikavkaz moved into fifth place with a 6-0 home trashing of bottom club Tyumen.

Georgy Demetradze and Igor Yanovsky each scored twice for the 1995 champions who host Spartak next week in the game of the round.

Former French and German internationals will play a fund-raising game for Daniel Niven, the Lens policeman still in a coma after being injured by hooligans during the World Cup.

The game will be played on September 20 in Kiel, Germany, across the border from Strasbourg.

The game will be played under the slogan 'Yes to football without violence', and the proceeds will go to the policeman's family.

Nivel was attacked by German thugs before Germany's match with Yugoslavia, reportedly as a payback by German hooligans who couldn't get match tickets.

Compiled by UK ABSW

COLLINS TO MERSEYSIDE

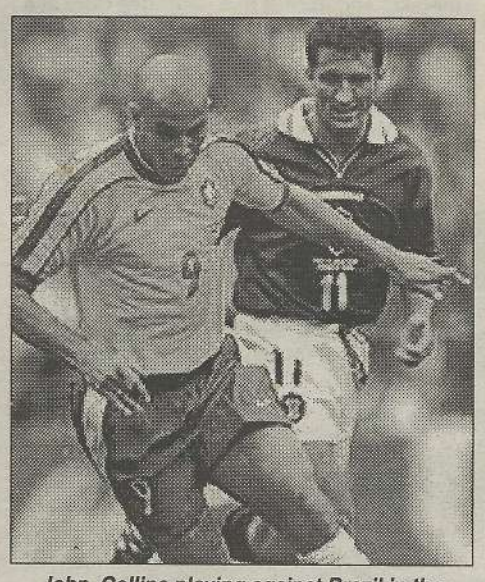
John Collins completed his 2.5 million pound move from Monaco to Everton on Wednesday. The 30-year-old Scottish international acknowledged the influence of new Everton manager Walter Smith on his decision, saying: "I talked to several clubs and thought long and hard about things, but Walter being at Everton now was a big pull.

"I have known him since I was 12, when he coached me one night a week at Dundee United. We go back a long way.

"I have missed the passion of British football, and the crowds, and that was also one of the reasons I have returned from France."

Collins joins recent big-money signings Olivier Dacourt from Strasbourg and defender Marco Materazzi from Perugia at Goodison Park.

Another Scot, ex-Rangers defender Alex Cleland, has also joined Smith's rebuilding operation as the club tries to keep up with the other Premier League clubs' plethora of signings. Crosstown rivals Liverpool have already dipped heavily into the transfer market in an effort to win back the glory days of old (see Taribo West story below).



John Collins playing against Brazil in the World Cup opener.

SUPER LEAGUE: MAN U DON'T RULE IT OUT

Manchester United fuelled speculation that they are poised to join the breakaway superleague by refusing to deny their involvement in detailed talks aimed at setting up Europe's elite division.

Sportsmail has learned that United's deputy chief executive, Peter Kenyon, was invited to attend a secret meeting in London earlier this month with superleague delegates to discuss the possibility of the club signing up to play in the $4billion, 32-team midweek competition.

But just 11 days ago, United issued a statement in which they vehemently denied they were even considering the prospect of joining the superleague. Spokesman Ken Ramsden had said:

'There is no truth in this at all. It is pure speculation. We are getting fed up with stories linking us with a European superleague.'

But last night, one of the club's leading directors, Maurice Watkins, refused to deny that the four-time Premiership champions are considering joining the rebel league, the brainchild of Italian media magnate Silvio Berlusconi.

When asked whether United were currently involved in detailed negotiations, Watkins said:

"Our stance remains the same as it has all along. We feel there is nothing to comment on and it is as simple and straightforward as that. I cannot confirm anything because I do not want to make any additional comment at the moment. I do not think it helps to make any other comments.

"I think for the moment we will just leave it like that and if there is anything more I can say, then I will be only too happy to do so."

So the country's highest-profile club continues to leave its supporters, shareholders and Premiership rivals in the dark with a stoic refusal to deny their clear involvement in the rebel league plotting.

Double-winners Arsenal also declined the opportunity to put a lid on the affair by refusing to answer when asked whether they were involved in the plan.

A spokeswoman for the north London club would only say: "We do not feel it appropriate to comment on the matter."

The refusal by both clubs to give a straight answer on the controversy will undoubtedly anger their fans and the wider football community. The latest developments will also cause anger within the FA and Premier League.

Any hint that Arsenal vice-chairman David Dein has been party to secret negotiations could leave him exposed to severe criticism from within the game. He is the FA's representative on the UEFA competitions committee, charged with putting England's case on the way European club football should be run.

If he were to become involved, ill-feeling within the domestic game could be huge, with Dein open to the charge that he has been operating under two agendas that represent a clear conflict of interests. At present, there is no suggestion he is personally involved in the negotiations.

Should that change, those clubs left out of the proposals will ask how Dein could possibly represent them properly if he was even aware of the plans, let alone an active participant in discussions.

It is understood that any guarantee Dein gave to the Premier League about Arsenal's non-involvement in the superleague proposals was purely verbal, with no written undertaking to that extent.

With Arsenal having been given permission to play Champions League games at Wembley this season, the club may well be looking to the pay-per-view possibilities of using the stadium as the club's permanent Eurobase after its $400million refit is completed in 2001.

SPURS GETS ITS HANDS ON 'TITI'

Tottenham Hotspur are close to signing Olympique Marseille's Guinean international striker Aboubacar "Titi" Camara, sources at the French first division club said on Wednesday.

Camara faces tough competition at Marseille from French internationals Robert Pires, Christope Dugarry and Florian Maurice and Italy's Fabrizio Ravanelli. Meanwhile, the club insisted on Wednesday that England World Cup defender Sol Campbell was on holiday and not on his way to Serie A with one of the Milan clubs.

The 23-year-old defender was seen discreetly boarding a flight to Milan but Spurs expect him back for pre-season training next week.

"Sol has not signed for anyone in Milan," a club spokesman said. "As far as the club are concerned, he is on holiday and is expected back at pre- season training on Monday."

Aston Villa manager John Gregory slammed the door on Manchester United's bid to land Dwight Yorke.

Selling the $32million-rated Trinidad striker could double Villa's cash mountain but Gregory insisted:*As far as I'm concerned the deal is off. I'm not interested in their money. Money won't score you goals.'

He even hinted he was prepared to quit if chairman Doug Ellis decided to sell the 26-year-old over his head. 'If it's taken out of my hands I'll be very upset,' warned Gregory.

'I've been told that any decision relating to Dwight is mine and mine alone. I'm expecting United to come back and speak to someone else with an offer of more money. But my answer will be the same. I'll turn it down.

'The money is totally irrelevant to Aston Villa, it would only go into the bank on top of the $32m already there. If we were trying to replace someone of Yorke's ability there are not many players in the world to fill his shoes. So without a ready-made replacement like Andy Cole, the money is no good to us.'

United manager Alex Ferguson is refusing to contemplate a swap deal involving former Newcastle United favourite Cole and his first offer of $16m for Yorke, $2m less than the deal United agreed with AC Milan for Patrick Kluivert.

UNSWORTH'S MISSUS WEARS THE TROUSERS!

Aston Villa are offering full refunds to fans who bought shirts bearing David Unsworth's name. Several dozen supporters had already forked out around $100 for the replica shirt carrying the name of their $6million buy from West Ham.

But now these shirts will prove worthless for the new season following the central defender's shock return to Everton for the same fee less than a week after joining Villa.

Villa's merchandising manager John Greenfield said: "I'm sorry for supporters who have bought these shirts in good faith. Only the manager, John Gregory, and the player know the full story but we can only apologise from our point of view for the inconvenience which has been caused to supporters.

"The number of shirts which have been sold is quite low certainly no more than 100 in total but anyone who has purchased such a shirt from our shop can obtain a refund."

Unsworth was expected to fly out to join his new team-mates in Holland and could make his first appearance for Walter Smith's side in the opening match of their tour, against Alkmaar.

A spokesman for Unsworth said: 'The deal is done. It has been three days of hard work but we can say that everyone at Villa has been helpful and understanding in this situation.' But last night, Villa boss Gregory was still fuming over Unsworth's decision.

He said: "I think the real reason was because he was under the impression that Birmingham was just outside Bolton, plus the fact that his missus wears the trousers. The fact is, everyone connected with David Unsworth wanted him to come to Villa. The day he signed for us, he couldn't believe he'd joined such a big club."

TARIBO GOES AWOL AS POOL SEARCH

While Liverpool engaged in their latest pre-season warm-up in Dublin, the real drama was taking place thousands of miles away as the Merseyside club conducted an African manhunt for Nigerian defender Taribo West.

The Anfield club, desperate to sign a central defender, have again turned their attention to the Inter Milan player a month after agreeing a $10million fee with the Italians. The problem was neither club could find him.

West, 24, has missed the start of Inter's training schedule and was believed to be back in Nigeria, worried about his family amid the volatile political climate there. But he has not left a forwarding address.

Liverpool have to work fast. They will need at least a fortnight to organise a work permit.

Joint managers Gerard Houllier and Roy Evans also spent Thursday evening watching French champions Lens play French Cup holders Paris St Germain playing in their country's equivalent of England's Charity Shield, with Lens central defenders Frederic Dehu and Xavier Meride the objects of their attention.

Liverpool have also been linked with 25-year-old French goalkeeper Richard Dutrue, who is currently with Spanish club Celta Vigo. Dutrue says: "It would be the opportunity of my life to join Liverpool they are one of the great clubs of Europe."

In the first game of a four-club tournament also involving Lazio and Leeds United, Liverpool scraped a victory over St Patrick's Athletic, who 48 hours earlier had gone out to Celtic in the Champions League preliminary round.

Liverpool went ahead in the 13th minute with a clever strike from Patrik Berger but the reasons why Liverpool's management team are scouring the world for a new defender were again only too obvious as Colin Hawkins equalised after being left totally unmarked.

Karlheinz Riedle put Liverpool back in front within a minute and young Danny Murphy made it 3-1 with a stunning 30-yard free-kick.

Liverpool's defending is such that even a two-goal lead is not safe and, when Phil Babb brought down Martin Kelly, Eddie Gormley scored from the penalty spot.

Compiled by UK ABSW

CELTIC START WITH A BANG

The cash-driven Scottish Premier League kicks off with the promise of even greater riches in store by the millenium — with pay-per-view options already written into the current broadcast contract.

Within the recently-signed $60 million four-year deal with Sky, the rights to future one-off matches have already been provisionally granted to the satellite station.

And the new SPL constitution has also cleared the path for pay-per-view events, with rights to matches now the sole property of the ten clubs.

Under the old regime, the Scottish Football League owned every game, and resisted top club's calls for a TV revolution.

Celtic opened its title defence in style on Saturday with Craig Burley hammering a hat-trick in a 5-0 victory over Dunfermline in the new-look Scottish premier league.

Burley put his side in front on the stroke of halftime and added two more late in the second half in an impressive season-opening display in front of 58,000.

Simon Donnelly added Celtic's second in the 58th minute and the champions destroyed Dunfermline with three more in the last seven minutes. Malky Mackay headed home in 83rd minute, before Burley's second-half double.

Aberdeen's Eion Jess became the first player to score in the revamped league which was formed in the close season by the top clubs. Jess fired home in the 21st minute of Aberdeens 2-0 win over Dundee.

Kilmarnock beat Dundee United 2-0 and Motherwell defeated St Johnstone 1-0. Rangers new year got off to a disastrous start, losing 2-1 to Hearts.

Action from the Scottish Premier opener between Celtic and Dunfermline.

Celtic.....5
Craig Burley 45, 84, 88, Simon Donnelly 58, Malcolm Mckay 83
Dunfermline.....0

Dundee.....0
Aberdeen.....2
Eion Jess 21, Craig Hignett 25

Motherwell 1
Gerard Stirling 49
St Johnstone.....0

Hearts 2
Adams 6, Hamilton 20
Rangers 1
Wallace 28

Kilmarnock 2
Paul Wright 32, Pat Nevin 72
Dundee United...0

HIGHBURY GETS DOLLED UP

Argentina midfielder Marcelo Gallardo will join Arsenal for $10million after the personal intervention of Highbury vice-chairman David Dein.

Manager Arsene Wenger is away with his squad in their pre-season camp in Germany but Dein has continued his dream of turning the north London club into European champions.

He invited the 22-year-old Gallardo, nicknamed 'The Doll' because of his boyish looks, to discuss a move to the Premiership champions.

Newcastle, despite Tyneside denials, were also in the frame and officials at his club River Plate claimed last night that the Magpies were poised to offer a staggering $20m to entice him to the North East.

Italian side Fiorentina and French club Paris St-Germain were others said to be interested but it appears this was an unsuccessful attempt by the Buenos Aires club to up the ante after Dein took control of talks and persuaded Gallardo to move to London.

The speedy attacking midfielder, who impressed after coming on as a second-half substitute against England in the World Cup, was given a guided tour of the Marble Halls and convinced of Arsenal's ambitions.

The fact that the Gunners have been given FA approval to play Champions League games at Wembley this season was a factor in convincing Gallardo, the new pin-up boy of Argentinian football, that his future lies at Arsenal.

Dein is also thought to be close to signing Gallardo's World Cup colleague Nelson Vivas, the 28-year-old Boca Juniors defender who left France 98 with the dubious honour of conceding the most fouls in the tournament.

While neither of the South Americans has put pen to paper so far, Dein is confident he has sealed a $24,000-a-week deal, which means Gallardo's arrival will not break Arsenal's rigid pay structure. The Vivas package will not be too different.

Wenger's desire to avoid giving in to outrageous demands saw him pull out of the race for two of the men who sent Argentina tumbling out of the World Cup, Dutch stars Patrick Kluivert and Ronald de Boer.

And with Wenger out of the country, Dein took it upon himself to become involved.

SHORT PASSES

With his Lordship

English Football Association chairman Keith Wiseman on Sunday dismissed a proposed European Super League competition as "a mistake" and warned that competing clubs and players could be kicked out of their domestic tournaments. Wiseman's warning came as English Premiership clubs claimed they have been kept in the dark about the proposals, which they oppose. There has been media speculation that Italian media mogul Silvio Berlusconi is one of those backing a possible breakaway league.

Blackpool, who have just lost kit sponsor Lotto, want their players to buy their own boots!! The decision has provoked an angry reaction with the team boycotting all off-field commitments until chairman Vicki Oyston has a change of heart.

West Bromwich Albion have made their second summer raid on Italy to sign midfielder Mario Bortolazzi on a free transfer from Genoa.

Leicester will have plenty of work to do before the start of the new season after a scrappy 2-1 win over First Division Swindon.

Manchester United and Arsenal will be thrown out of the Premiership next month if they refuse to sign a pledge that they will not join the breakaway European superleague!!

Dave Bassett faces showdown talks with Pierre Van Hooijdonk after rejecting the Holland World Cup striker's shock transfer request.

Crystal Palace boss Terry Venables is keen on making stars of Chinese players Sun-Gi and Fan-Zyi. Sun is a defender and Captain of China and comes highly recommended by El Tel's assistant Ted Buxton.

Dean Holdsworth has promised to stand by relegated Bolton and rebuild his own stuttering career at the Reebok Stadium.

Arsenal will unveil Argentina World Cup defender Nelson Vivas later this week, a $4 million capture. The Boca Juniors 29-year-old has agreed a four-year deal.

Steve Claridge is poised to make a $600,000 switch to his hometown club Portsmouth from Wolves.

New Sheffield Wednesday manager Danny Wilson has strengthened his side by paying PSV Eindhoven $5m for 31-year-old Dutch World Cup midfielder Wim Jonk, but he may have to buy again if pre-season form is any guide at his new club.

Tottenham's Christian Gross heads bookmakers William Hill's list as the manager most likely to be sacked by his club at the end of the forthcoming season.

Aston Villa striker Stan Collymore faces the prospect of missing the start of the season after suffering a thigh strain in a friendly against Peterborough on Friday.

Notts Forest have had their offer for WBA winger Kevin Kilbane turned down by the Hawthorns club. Forest have off-loaded strikers Campbell and Taylor just recently.

Crystal Palace have completed the signing of two Argentinian Under 21 internationals from Argentina Juniors for a combined $4million. The highly-regarded Pablo Rodrigues, 21, and Cristian Ledesma, 19, have been targetted by a number of top clubs throughout Europe. Palace also have boom recruit, Aussie Nick Rizzo.

Keith Gillespie, the Northern Ireland international, has left Newcastle United and has signed with Middlesbrough.

Alan Shearer has pledged his loyalty to the Geordies, the club he supported as a nipper. There were rumours emanating from Tyneside that Alan was unhappy, but that, like many things, just seems like media speculation.

THE NEXT GEORGIE BEST?

Robbie Keane, Wolves' $10million-rated Republic of Ireland striker, will spearhead the attack for the first time against Spanish giants Barcelona at Molineux today.

Keane, 18, who will be making his first pre-season appearance for Wolves after playing for Ireland in the European Youth Championships in Cyprus, made a stunning impact playing just behind the strikers in his debut season last term.

Manager Mark McGhee said: 'The time has arrived to play Robbie up front. He can hold the ball and shield it. Now we have to find the right partner for him.' Wolves are giving a trial to goalkeeper Pavel Srnicek, who has been frozen out at Newcastle.

The luck of the Irish ran out on the weekend when Dublin's St Patrick's Athletic ended a hectic week of high class action by being soundly thrashed by classy Romans Lazio in the Carlsberg Challenge in Lansdowne Road.

The Irish Premier Division champions were knocked out of the Champions Cup by Glasgow Celtic on Wednesday night, conceding just two goals to the Scots.

Then on Friday they opened this four-club spectacular against Liverpool, scored twice but were beaten by the odd goal in five.

So it was a rather leg-weary bunch of part-timers who took on the Italians in the curtain-raiser, a play-off for third and fourth places.

And having conceded two goals in the first 18 minutes, their defeat was inevitable.

Playmaker De La Pena, man of the match, made the first for Dejan Stankovic who left-footed past Trevor Wood after 10 minutes. And the second eight minutes later was just as easy for Pavel Nedved, set up with a cross from the right by Roberto Rambaudi.

I REMEMBER WHEN ...

Stuart Jones' weekly look back at the UK game over the years

1973/74: LEEDS' DOMINATION CONTINUES

Leeds United won the 1973/74 Division One title - their second in five years - by finishing five points clear of previous champions Liverpool.

United lost just one game at home and conceded only 18 goals in 21 matches at Elland Road. They were even more miserly in their travels, concedingjust 13 goals. In fact, they dropped only 22 points all season. Liverpool finished runners up, whilst the champions of two seasons previous, Derby County, and Ipswich Town filled the minor placings.

In fact, over a period of the previous 22 years only Arsenal (3), Everton (3), Aston Villa and Nottingham Forest were to win the title apart from the teams finishing in the top three in the Division One standings of 1973/74.

For the first time three teams were relegated to the second division. The system was different to what it is today, as the bottom three teams in Division One were replaced by the top three sides in Division Two.

At the bottom, Norwich City went down along with giants Manchester United.

For United it was a disaster. Even if two teams had been relegated they would have dropped down to Division Two. One of United's legends, Denis Law, scored the goal for Manchester City that sent his former team mates down. It was to be his last contribution in football and he has never liked speaking of it since.

Despite a valiant fight to the end, Southampton was the first team to finish third last and get relegated from the top division. Their 3-0 win at Everton on the final day was not enough. Birmingham won their final game and West Ham picked up a point from their last game that enabled both to finish in front of Southampton.

Middlesbrough thoroughly dominated Division Two and won the title 15 points clear of second placed Luton Town. Luton finished just two points clear of missing out altogether as fourth placed Orient drew their last game on May 3rd (1-1 at home to Aston Villa), leaving Carlisle (who had won their final game of the season 2-0 at home to Aston Villa) in third place and earning promotion to the top division for the very first time in their history. Near neighbours (well as close as they come for Carlisle), Blackpool and Sunderland, finished two points shy of the Cumbrians.

At the bottom, three sides were relegated. Preston had been deducted a point for fielding an ineligible player (the flavour of the season as Newport County were similarly penalised). For PNE it was not too costly for they would have been relegated with the extra point anyway. Swindon finished bottom on 25 points and the third side relegated was Crystal Palace. Palace's 1-1 draw with Cardiff, coupled with Sheffield Wednesday's 1-0 at home to Bolton on the last day of the season, sent the London side down.

Out of Division Three came Oldham, Bristol Rovers, and York City. All three finished well clear of the field although the battle for the top spot had been much closer. Oldham wrapped it up thanks to a 0-0 draw on May 3rd 1974, away to Plymouth Argyle. Three days later York City won 2-0 at the same venue, but that single point was enough to give Athletic the championship. In fact Rovers even finished ahead of York, albeit on goal difference.

At the bottom the four relegated sides were clear cut with Rochdale last and seven points behind Southport who were three points behind Shrewsbury who were four points adrift of Cambridge. These four teams were well adrift of the other team with Cambridge seven points behind the next team.

Hereford continued their amazing run by consolidating a spot in Division Three.

As at the bottom of Division Three, the race for the top four in Division Four was fairly clear cut. Peterborough won the championship with Gillingham, Colchester, and Bury also gaining promotion.

Exeter City failed to show for their away game against Scunthorpe and thus the points were given to the home side. However, it did not mean a whole lot to either side in the long run. Stockport County finished bottom.

The League Cup semi finals saw Plymouth lose to Manchester City and Norwich to Wolves. The Wembley final went to Wolves by two goals to one.

Hibbitt and Richards scored for Wolves allowing skipper Mike Bailey to hold the trophy aloft.

In the FA Cup, Leicester (although they did take it to a replay) and Burnley were no match for Liverpool and Newcastle respectively in the semi-finals. The final was supposed to be a tight affair but it turned out to be not the case. Kevin Keegan lined his own volley up to score first, then John Toshack flicked on a long ball for Steve Heighway to smash the ball home. Brilliant skills from Bill Shankly's men led to Keegan's second goal giving the trophy to Liverpool FC.

European competition saw a fairly minimal impact from British sides with Tottenham making the UEFA Cup final and then promptly losing to Feyenoord 2-0 after drawing the first leg 2-2.

Dartford surprised many by taking out the Southern League. They nearly made it a double but lost the final of the FA Trophy at Wembley to Morecambe. Newly-promoted Grantham finished runners up with Chelmsford City third. Wimbledon avoided relegation thanks to a late rally and in their place went Worcester City, Bedford, Folkestone, and Hillingdon Borough.

Stourbridge won the first division north with runners up Burton Albion winning promotion at their first attempt. In the south, Wealdstone (as champions) and Bath City won promotion. Witney Town made a great time of their very first season in the Southern League. Neighbours Banbury United saw Northampton Town become the first league club to visit Banbury Stadium in a competitive match as they made the FA Cup first round for the first time.

On the poor side of the ledger, Cheltenham were banned from the FA Trophy and FA Cup for not paying visiting sides their portion of the gate within the stipulated period.

AP Leamington pulled back a 1-0 first leg deficit to defeat Bromsgrove Rovers 3-1 in the final of the Southern League Cup.

Celtic took out Scottish Division One once again. Hibs were four points behind in second place with Rangers a further point behind. Falkirk was relegated along with East Fife whose long battle with Dunfermline finally came to nothing. April 24's 1-0 loss at Dumbarton by the Pars would have been enough for East Fife had they not won 1-0 at Dundee three days later.

East Fife lost 0-1 to Ayr on the same day and thus went down on an inferior goal difference.

Ardrie and Kilmarnock were promoted from Division Two - Airdrie as Champions. Brechin City was bottom of the league for the second successive year. As in the league, the League Cup continued to be dominated by Celtic as they made the final once more. However, they were not up for it on final day and Dundee walked away with the cup thanks to a 1–0 win at Hampden Park.

Celtic did not make the same mistake in the Scottish FA Cup final against the other side from Dundee. Dundee United were outclassed as Celtic picked up the double, thanks to a 3-0 win at the same venue where they had lost the League Cup final the previous year.

AROUND EUROPE:

	League Champions	Cup Winners
Austria:	SK VOEST Linz	FK Austria
Belgium:	RSC Anderlecht	KSV Waregem
Bulgaria:	Levski-Spartak	CSKA Sofia
France:	AS Saint-Etienne	AS Saint-Etienne
Germany -East:	I.FC Magdeburg	Carl-Zeiss Jena
-West:	Bayern Munchen	Eintracht Frankfurt
Holland:	Feyenoord	PSV Eindhoven
Italy:	SS Lazio	Bologna FC
Poland:	Ruch Chorzow	Ruch Chorzow
Portugal:	Sporting CP	Sporting CP
Romania:	Universitatea Craiova	Jiul Petrosani
Russia:	Dynamo Kiev	Dynamo Kiev
Spain:	CF Barcelona	Real Madrid CF
Sweden:	Malmo FF	Malmo FF
Switzerland:	FC Zurich	Sion

Euro Champions:	Bayern Munchen
UEFA Cup:	Feyenoord
Euro Cup Winners Cup:	I.FC Magdeburg
Euro Super Cup:	Ajax

ENGLAND

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	42	12	8	1	38	18	12	6	3	28	13	62
Liverpool	42	18	2	1	34	11	4	11	6	18	20	57
Derby Co	42	13	7	1	40	16	4	7	10	12	26	48
Ipswich T	42	10	7	4	38	21	8	4	9	29	37	47
Stoke C	42	13	6	2	39	15	2	10	9	15	27	46
Burnley	42	10	9	2	29	16	6	5	10	27	37	46
Everton	42	12	7	2	29	14	4	5	12	21	34	44
QPR	42	8	10	3	30	17	5	7	9	26	35	43
Leicester C	42	10	7	4	35	17	3	9	9	16	24	42
Arsenal	42	9	7	5	23	16	5	7	9	26	35	42
Tottenham H	42	9	4	8	26	27	5	10	6	19	23	42
Wolves	42	11	6	4	30	18	2	9	10	19	31	41
Sheffield U	42	7	7	7	25	22	7	5	9	19	27	40
Manchester C	42	10	7	4	25	17	4	5	12	14	29	40
Newcastle U	42	9	6	6	28	21	4	6	11	21	27	38
Coventry C	42	10	5	6	25	18	4	5	12	18	36	38
Chelsea	42	9	4	8	36	29	3	9	9	20	31	27
West Ham U	42	7	7	7	36	32	4	8	9	19	28	37
Birmingham C	42	10	7	4	30	21	2	6	13	22	43	37
Southampton	42	8	10	3	30	20	3	4	14	17	48	36
Manchester U	42	7	7	7	23	20	3	5	13	15	28	32
Norwich C	42	6	9	6	25	27	1	6	14	12	35	29

DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbrough	42	16	4	1	40	8	11	7	3	37	22	65
Luton T	42	12	5	4	42	25	7	7	7	22	26	50
Carlisle U	42	13	5	3	40	17	7	4	10	21	31	49
Orient	42	9	8	4	28	17	6	10	5	27	25	48
Blackpool	42	11	5	5	35	17	6	8	7	22	23	47
Sunderland	42	11	6	4	32	15	8	3	10	26	29	47
Nottingham F	42	12	6	3	40	19	3	9	9	17	24	45
WBA	42	8	9	4	28	24	6	7	8	20	21	44
Hull C	42	9	9	3	25	15	4	8	9	21	32	43
Notts Co	42	8	6	7	30	35	7	7	7	25	25	43
Bolton W	42	12	5	4	30	17	3	7	11	14	23	42
Millwall	42	10	6	5	28	16	4	8	9	23	25	42
Fulham	42	11	4	6	26	20	5	6	10	13	23	42
Aston Villa	42	8	9	4	33	21	5	6	10	15	24	41
Portsmouth	42	9	8	4	26	16	5	4	12	19	46	40
Bristol C	42	9	5	7	25	20	5	5	11	22	34	38
Cardiff C	42	8	7	6	27	20	2	9	10	22	42	36
Oxford U	42	8	8	5	27	21	2	8	11	8	25	36
Sheffield W	42	9	6	6	33	24	3	5	13	18	39	35
Crystal P	42	6	7	8	24	24	5	5	11	19	32	34
Preston NE	42	7	8	6	24	23	2	6	13	16	39	*31

**Preston North End had one point deducted for fielding an ineligible player*

DIVISION THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Oldham A	46	13	6	4	50	23	12	6	5	33	24	62
Bristol R	46	15	6	2	37	15	7	11	5	28	18	61
York C	46	13	8	2	37	15	8	11	4	30	23	61
Wrexham	46	15	6	2	44	15	7	6	10	19	28	56
Chesterfield	46	14	6	3	31	16	7	8	8	24	26	56
Grimsby T	46	14	6	3	48	21	4	9	10	19	29	51
Watford	46	12	6	5	34	21	7	6	10	30	35	50
Aldershot	46	13	6	4	47	22	6	5	12	18	30	49
Halifax T	46	9	11	3	23	15	5	10	8	25	36	49
Huddersfield T	46	14	5	4	37	16	3	8	12	19	39	47
Bournemouth	46	11	5	7	25	23	5	10	8	29	35	47
Southend U	46	10	7	6	40	30	6	7	10	22	32	46
Blackburn R	46	13	4	6	38	21	5	6	12	24	43	46
Charlton A	46	13	5	5	43	29	6	3	14	23	44	46
Walsall	46	11	7	5	37	19	5	6	12	20	29	45
Tranmere R	46	10	8	5	31	15	5	7	11	19	29	45
Plymouth A	46	13	6	4	37	17	4	4	15	22	37	44
Hereford U	46	10	5	8	31	25	4	10	9	22	32	43
Brighton & HA	46	10	3	10	31	31	6	8	9	21	27	43
Port Vale	46	12	6	5	37	23	2	8	13	15	35	42
Cambridge U	46	11	7	5	36	27	2	2	19	12	54	35
Shrewsbury T	46	7	7	9	24	24	3	4	16	17	38	31
Southport	46	4	14	5	19	20	2	2	19	16	62	28
Rochdale	46	1	12	10	24	38	1	5	17	14	56	21

DIVISION FOUR

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Peterboro'U	46	19	4	0	49	10	8	7	8	26	28	65
Gillingham	46	16	5	2	51	16	9	7	7	39	33	62
Colchester U	46	16	5	2	46	14	8	7	8	27	22	60
Bury	46	18	3	2	51	14	6	8	9	30	35	59
Northampton T	46	14	7	2	39	14	6	6	11	24	34	53
Reading	46	11	9	3	37	13	5	10	8	21	24	51
Chester	46	13	6	4	31	19	4	9	10	23	36	49
Bradford C	46	14	7	2	45	20	3	7	13	13	32	48
Newport Co	46	13	6	4	39	23	3	8	12	17	42	*45
Exeter C	45	12	5	6	37	20	6	3	13	21	35	†44
Hartlepool	46	11	4	8	29	16	5	8	10	19	31	44
Lincoln C	46	10	8	5	40	30	6	4	13	23	37	44
Barnsley	46	15	5	3	42	16	2	5	16	16	48	44
Swansea C	46	11	6	6	28	15	5	5	13	17	31	43
Rotherham U	46	10	9	4	33	22	5	4	14	23	36	43
Torquay U	46	11	7	5	37	23	2	10	11	15	34	43
Mansfield T	46	13	8	2	47	24	0	9	14	15	45	43
Scunthorpe U	45	12	7	3	33	17	2	5	16	14	47	†42
Brentford	46	9	7	7	31	20	3	9	11	17	30	40
Darlington	46	9	8	6	29	24	4	5	14	11	38	39
Crewe A	46	11	5	7	28	30	3	5	15	15	41	38
Doncaster R	46	10	7	6	32	22	2	4	17	15	58	35
Workington	46	10	8	5	33	26	1	5	17	10	48	35
Stockport Co	46	4	12	7	22	25	3	8	12	22	44	34

**NewportCounty had one point deducted for fielding an ineligible player. †Scunthorpe United awarded points after Exeter City failed to turn up.*

SOUTHERN LEAGUE

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dartford	42	22	13	7	67	37	57
Grantham	42	18	13	11	70	49	49
Chelmsford City	42	19	10	13	62	49	48
Kettering Town	42	16	16	10	62	51	48
Maidstone United	42	16	14	12	54	43	46
Yeovil Town	42	13	20	9	45	39	46
Weymouth	42	19	7	16	60	41	45
Barnet	42	18	9	15	55	46	45
Nuneaton Borough	42	13	19	10	54	47	45
Cambridge City	42	15	12	15	45	54	42
Atherstone Town	42	16	9	17	61	59	41
Wimbledon	42	15	11	16	50	56	41
Telford United	42	12	16	14	51	57	40
Dover	42	11	17	14	41	46	39
Tonbridge	42	12	15	15	38	45	39
Romford	42	11	17	14	39	52	39
Margate	42	15	8	19	56	63	38
Guildford City	42	13	11	18	48	67	37
Worcester City	42	11	14	17	53	67	36
Bedford Town	42	11	14	17	38	51	36
Folkestone	42	11	12	19	56	65	34
Hillingdon Borough	42	9	15	18	44	65	33

FIRST DIVISION NORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Stourbridge	42	29	11	2	103	36	69
Burton Albion	42	27	9	6	88	32	63
Cheltenham Town	42	24	9	10	75	51	56
AP Leamington	42	21	12	9	82	45	54
Enderby Town	42	19	14	9	60	36	52
Witney Town	42	20	10	12	69	55	50
Stevenage Athletic	42	19	11	12	65	46	49
Banbury United	42	19	11	12	69	57	49
King's Lynn	42	19	10	13	65	50	48
Kidderminster Harriers	42	15	14	13	67	53	44
Merthyr Tydfil	42	16	12	14	70	61	44
Redditch United	42	14	11	17	56	73	39
Bromsgrove Rovers	42	14	10	18	54	61	38
Bedworth United	42	14	10	18	50	77	38
Tamworth	42	13	11	18	42	51	37
Corby Town	42	12	11	19	40	57	35
Bletchley Town	42	10	15	17	47	71	35
Barry Town	42	10	8	24	53	85	28
Bury Town	42	10	6	26	57	84	26
Gloucester City	42	10	6	26	52	81	26
Wellingborough Town	42	7	9	26	42	87	23
Dunstable Town	42	5	11	26	26	83	21

FIRST DIVISION SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wealdstone	38	26	7	5	75	35	59
Bath City	38	20	8	10	55	34	48
Waterlooville	38	16	15	7	55	38	47
Minehead	38	16	15	7	69	52	47
Bideford	38	17	12	9	61	51	46
Poole Town	38	18	9	11	57	47	45
Bexley United	38	18	7	13	50	42	43
Hastings United	38	16	9	13	45	36	41
Basingstoke Town	38	14	11	13	55	44	39
Gravesend & Northfleet	38	13	13	12	58	52	39
Bognor Regis Town	38	13	12	13	48	54	38
Ashford Town	38	14	8	16	41	42	36
Ramsgate	38	13	9	16	46	44	35
Dorchester Town	38	10	13	15	40	48	33
Canterbury City	38	90	12	17	37	46	30
Trowbridge Town	38	8	14	16	44	61	30
Salisbury	38	10	9	19	40	60	29
Metropolitan Police	38	9	11	18	37	61	29
Andover	38	11	3	24	38	70	25
Crawley Town	38	6	9	23	35	79	21

SCOTLAND

DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	34	23	7	4	82	27	53
Hibernian	34	20	9	5	75	42	49
Rangers	34	21	6	7	67	34	48
Aberdeen	34	13	16	5	46	26	42
Dundee	34	16	7	11	67	48	39
Hearts	34	14	10	10	54	43	38
Ayr U	34	15	8	11	44	40	38
Dundee U	34	15	7	12	55	51	37
Motherwell	34	14	7	13	45	40	35
Dumbarton	34	11	7	16	43	58	29
Partick T	34	9	10	15	33	46	28
St Johnstone	34	9	10	15	41	60	28
Arbroath	34	10	7	17	52	69	27
Morton	34	8	10	16	37	49	26
Clyde	34	8	9	17	29	65	25
Dunfermline A	34	8	8	18	43	65	24
East Fife	34	9	6	19	26	51	24
Falkirk	34	4	14	16	33	58	22

DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Airdrie	36	28	4	4	102	25	60
Kilmarnock	36	26	6	4	96	44	58
Hamilton A	36	24	7	5	68	38	55
Queen of South	36	20	7	9	73	41	47
Berwick R	36	16	13	7	53	35	45
Raith R	36	18	9	9	69	48	45
Stirling A	36	17	6	13	76	50	40
Montrose	36	15	7	14	71	64	37
Stranraer	36	14	8	14	64	70	36
Clydebank	36	13	8	15	47	48	34
St Mirren	36	12	10	14	62	66	34
Alloa	36	15	4	17	47	58	34
Cowdenbeath	36	11	9	16	59	85	31
Queen's Park	36	12	4	20	42	64	28
Stenhousemuir	36	11	5	20	44	59	27
E Stirling	36	9	5	22	47	73	23
Albion R	36	7	6	23	38	72	20
Forfar A	36	5	6	25	42	94	16
Brechin C	36	5	4	27	33	99	14

GREEK SOCCER'S

Frantzeskos (PAOK)

Dabizas (Newcastle U.)

Georgiadis (Newcastle U.)

Zagorakis (Sheffield U.)

Maladenis (AEK)

Machlas (PSV Eindhoven)

Lymberopoulos (PAO)

Karapialis (Olympiakos)

Konstandinidis (PAO)

Borbokis (Sheffield U.)

ASSAULT ON EUROPE